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ABSTRACT

Designed to provide examples of the art form that in teaching has been tagged "the lesson cycle," this monograph contains a collection of 50 exemplary lessons that elementary and secondary English teachers have designed and that demonstrate the fusion of form and content that characterize the art of their teaching. The monograph is divided into sections on elementary lessons, middle school lessons, secondary lessons, and mixed level lessons. (KEH)

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Fusing FORM With CONTENT

A COLLECTION OF EXEMPLARY LESSONS

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Edited by
Joyce Armstrong Carroll

Fusing Form With Content

A Collection of Exemplary Lessons

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Joyce Armstrong Carroll

" ...fuses form with content. It is at once in a dream mode, a symbolic illusion, via its medium while depicting the process of symbolic transformation through its enactment. The viewer [teacher, reader], in turn, vicariously undergoes the process."

Joyce Armstrong Carroll
Language and Film: Langer and Marienbad,
English in Texas, Volume 13, Number 3, Spring 1982

Texas Joint Council of Teachers of English
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With this monograph, the first published under the auspices of the Texas *Joint Council of Teachers of English*, it is fitting to extend appreciation to those who helped make it happen.

To Betty Gray, Past President of TJCTE from Klein I.S.D., who conceived the idea for this monograph and who worked with me on outlining its present form;

To Sandra Frazier, from Spring I.S.D., who carefully typed the original manuscripts into the computer;

To Becky Ebner, from Northside I.S. D., who conscientiously proofread the manuscripts;

To Edward E. Wilson, editor of *English in Texas* from Spring I. S. D., who labored over the layout, cover, and printing;

And finally:

To all the magnificent teachers who shared the art of their profession through the writing of these most helpful lessons which help us all better understand how to fuse form with content.

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Foreword

Fusing Form with Content: A Collection of Exemplary Lessons

When Lucy Calkins titled her book *The Art of Teaching Writing*, she raised our collective consciousness to what we already knew—teaching is an art. As with every other authentic art, teaching has assimilated within it an appropriate form. At this particular time the form has been tagged "the lesson cycle" and it flags such elements as "focus," "guided practice," and "closure." Throughout classrooms, on a daily basis, administrators and designated trained appraisers observe lessons and check for a fusion of form with content.

That we have a form for teaching a lesson is not in itself a negative nor should it stifle the art and heart of teaching. Consider a comparison of works by Aristotle, Faulkner, Gilbert and Sullivan, and Hitchcock—each have form, but the form varies with the author's style, the audience, and the purpose. So too with fusing form and content in the art of teaching—the inherent form exists, but the execution of that form varies with the style of the teacher, the needs of the learners, and the objectives of the curriculum. So we must continually ascertain the authenticity of the relationship between the form and content. In *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*, Laurence Perrine eloquently explains this delicate relationship when discussing the art of poetry, ". . . the form should be adequate to the content. This rule does not mean that there must always be a close and easily demonstrable correspondence. It does mean that there will be no glaring discrepancies" (761).

Phrasing it another way, Madeline Hunter in the September 1989 issue of *English Journal*, compares the Taj Mahal with the Lincoln Memorial. Each embodies basic principles of architecture and engineering, she asserts, yet they do not look the same. So too with artistic teaching. "Principles of learning free teachers to design and teach beautiful lessons which do not look at all the same but employ many similar principles of effective teaching to yield lasting learning" (18).

In this monograph, teachers have designed and recorded the art of their teaching through beautiful lessons which do not look the same but which do work. Further, they have coupled these lessons with a traditional scenario of moving students from the unknown to the known then reinforcing that known by way of a lesson cycle. In short, they have fused form with content and in doing so they have created an artistic reality; they have verified teaching as an art.

Joyce Armstrong Carroll 1990

1 The Elementary Lessons

I leave to children exclusively, but only for the life of their childhood, all and every, the dandelions of the fields and the daisies thereof, with the right to play among them freely.
Williston Fish

Alfred North Whitehead reminds us in The Aims of Education that it is natural for the mind to engage in the process of discovery. Children explore, seek answers, and wonder. He calls this "the stage of romance." And he cautions us that while we can never have education without discipline, we can never have education without freedom either. In this section, teachers share lessons that are not without discipline, but more importantly, these lessons give children the freedom their fresh, young minds need to grow.

Add a Character

GRADE LEVEL: Primary

The purpose of this lesson is to stimulate writing in response to literature by having students analyze the characters of a story and actually become an additional character through creative dramatics. The character analysis develops through the use of a teacher-directed format with a chart prepared by the teacher. One scene is reenacted with an additional character. As a follow up, students write a dialog independently, or they together develop a dialogue on a language experience chart.

FOCUS: The teacher dresses as one of the characters in the book and gives a "Hello, My name is . . . " talk.

MATERIALS: Picture Book
Chart Tablet

GUIDED PRACTICE: To begin the lesson, students listen as the teacher reads a short book. This book should contain at least two clearly defined characters. Following the reading, the class develops a character sketch using chart form. To complete the chart, students agree or disagree with each of the characteristics identified on the chart. An example of a finished chart follows:

	Kind	Mean	Loving	Unloving
Cinderella	x		x	
Stepmother		x		x
Stepsisters		x		x

The group then decides on a different character to include in the story. After adding the character's name to the chart, the students identify the personality traits of that character. The teacher selects a scene to reenact and asks questions like, "What could Cinderella have said to the neighbor if she came over while Cinderella was cleaning after the stepsisters left for the ball?" A simple dialog develops in this teacher-directed activity. Volunteers role play the situation.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Each student writes a dialog, using the same new character but a different scene in the story. Early in the year, kindergarten children might need to dictate their dialog to the teacher. The other students could be drawing their scene as the teacher works individually with students. However, young students should be encouraged to write something below their picture using invented spelling as needed.

CLOSURE: Students share their dialogs. Closure could also occur after the language experience lesson with a group of students reenacting the scene, using the dialog which was developed by the group.

Sue Bradley, Blackshear Elementary, Hearne, Texas
Pat Groholski, Eastside Elementary, Hearne, Texas

Table of Contents

GRADE LEVEL: First or Second Grades

This lesson involves using the table of contents to locate a story that contains information on a specific topic. Students should have previous knowledge about using the table of contents to locate a story and may have written a book of original stories. High level thinking skills addressed are inference, vocabulary development, writing, classifying, analyzing, and locating information. Further, this lesson provides students with opportunities to use basic parts of a book, table of contents, title pages.

FOCUS: The teacher shows a box that has been prepared to look like a book. It contains different objects. The teacher says, "I want you to pretend that is is a book.

Let's see what's inside." Next the teacher leads the class to see the connection between "what's inside" and the word *contents*. As the teacher pulls out the objects, he or she should have the object's name labeled on a card ready to place on a chart rack. When all the objects are named, the teacher shows how the names make a list of the things inside the box. The teacher then explains that people call this a "list of contents." Next the teacher says, "The contents of a book also tell us what is inside. We call the "list of contents" in a book its "table of contents." Today we shall learn how to use the table of contents to see what is inside a book. By the end of this lesson, we shall be able to find stories in a book. We shall learn to use the table of contents to find information quickly and to save time."

MATERIALS: a box which opens and resembles a book
small objects that will fit inside the box
cards labeled with names of the objects
a large chart with a sample table of contents
supplementary reader containing a contents page
small book models, each with a table of contents
markers
a practice sheet (supplied with the plan)
individual storybooks written by each child
How Can I Find Out? by Mable Gee

GUIDED PRACTICE: The teacher explains the uses of a table of contents by using a sample table of contents written on a large chart. The teacher models how to find a story that contains certain information. Then the teacher asks the students to come to the chart to find other stories about given information. If the teacher feels more examples are needed, each child gets a copy of a supplementary reader with a table of contents and tries to find some stories about given information. The instructor may assess mastery or monitor by giving the students a miniature book model with a table of contents or a book marker with a topic. The student must find the correct book model to match the bookmark. Half of the children are given book models, and the other half are given book markers. The children with the book markers take turns reading the topic on their marker while the others with the book models read their contents to see if their book model has a story about that topic. If the student has the matching book model, the student gives the book model to the child with the book marker. A small group of children may have both a book model and book marker that do not match.

If reteaching is necessary, the teacher may use a box of cake mix to show the contents of the box and orally go over how one can see what is in the box by looking at the ingredients. The teacher may relate that one would not choose a cake mix if he/she wanted to make jello; so one would not choose a story about dogs if one

needed to read about cats.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The teacher distributes a teacher- made practice sheet giving directions and allowing the student to complete it independently. The directions are to read the story titles and pages for each story and write the page number of the story where one might find information on that topic.

ENTENDED PRACTICE: The students write a table of contents for an original book of stories they have written. If time permits, the students may ask other students what story in their own book contains information about.... Also students may go to the reading center to work with the books and book markers.

CLOSURE: The teacher reads pages 1-5 from the book How Can I Find Out? by Mable Gee (Chicago, The Children's Press, 1953, 1-5) to lead into the summary of the lesson. Then the teacher discusses all the books on the pictures in the pages and asks, "How can the boy quickly find the books which contain information about ants? It would take a long time to read all these books just to see which one contains information about ants. Today we have learned how to use a table of contents to find the information we need. Who can tell me how the boy can find the information about ants?" Last, the teacher may summarize the objective, being sure to praise the students about their progress and behavior.

Geneva Gilmore Weedon, Willow Springs Elementary, Killeen, Texas

Visuals in the Classroom

GRADE LEVEL: First through Third Grades

Most students own a large percentage of their working vocabulary before they enter school. However, the idiosyncrasies of the English language make it difficult to learn the skills needed to communicate effectively. Teachers must find ways to simplify learning. Some say, "A picture is worth a thousand words"; therefore, visuals can serve this purpose. The difficult skill of knowing when to double the final consonant can be taught by using a train. The purpose is to use simple and complex structural analysis: root words and suffixes.

MATERIALS: Chalkboard or overhead
Teacher made practice sheets
A laminated visual of a train
Erasable markers

FOCUS: Doubling the end consonant

SAY: "I want to write two sentences on the board, but I need some help. The first sentences is, 'The rabbit was hopping.' "

WRITE: "The rabbit was ." on the board. Invite a student to spell *hopping* and write whatever he or she says in the blank.

SAY: "Now I want to write, 'The rabbit was hoping.' "

WRITE: " The rabbit was ." Ask for another volunteer to spell *hoping* and write whatever he or she says in the blank.

DISCUSS: Ask questions about how the students know what to do when they add suffixes to words. How do they know that the two sentences on the board are correct or not. If they were written correctly, discuss how they know they are, and if they are not, how do they know they are not correct. Then have the students brainstorm a list of verbs on the board. You will get some with consonants which do not need to be doubled as well as some that do. Have volunteers come to the board and add "ing" to the verbs they listed. Usually some confusion will develop at this point and some students will realize they need help. (If no problems arise, this lesson does not need to continue. You have assessed the students' learning.)

SAY: "I have something special which will help you to determine when to double the end consonant." (Erase all the writing except the list of root words.)

GUIDED PRACTICE: Either prepare a visual of an old fashioned train complete with engine, coal car, two freight cars, and a caboose, or draw one on the board or overhead.

Explain that this is a train like those used many years ago before diesel oil and gas were available. Coal was used to fuel the engine and the engineer had to keep shoveling coal into the train's furnace to keep the train moving. A car holding this coal was hooked behind the engine.

WRITE: Short Line on the board.

Explain that the name of this special train is the Short Line. Words with short vowel sounds are the only words which may ride on the train. The purpose of this train is to help identify which words need the final consonant doubled before adding a suffix.

Refer to the list of verbs they brainstormed earlier. Tell the students since only

short vowel sounding words can ride on the train, the first thing they must do is to determine which words may ride the Short Line. Go through the list one by one and have the students identify the vowel sounds. Erase all the words that do not have the short sound. Explain that those sounds never need doubling.

SAY: "We are now ready to load the Short Line. Look at the first word on the list." (*Stop* will be used for this example.) *"Stop* is the first word."

Explain the beginning sound goes on the engine. What is the beginning sound of *stop*? Yes, it is *st*. Both letters will go on the engine. No matter how many letters the beginning sound has, they all go on the engine. Write *st* on the engine.

Explain the vowel goes on the coal car. The coal car may only carry one vowel in a word. If there is more than one vowel in a word, it can not ride on the Short Line. Let a student identify the vowel. Write the vowel on the coal car.

SAY: "Next we will load the end consonants. This train has two freight cars that will carry only one consonant each. Remember, this train is special. It is also particular. It will not run unless it has its way. It must have two consonants."

Identify the end consonants and write them on the freight cars. If there is only one, write that one on the first car. Leave the other blank for the time being.

SAY: " Now we have the root word *stop* loaded on the train. We need to add the suffix. The suffix rides on the caboose. Today we are working with the suffix *ing*. We will write *ing* on the caboose.

The train is loaded with the root word *stop* and the suffix *ing*. Is it ready to move? Go back over the letters loaded on the train. If something is loaded on every car, it is ready to roll. Words, like *camp* and *jump* will completely fill up the train and will be ready to roll." (Note: Words that end in the letter x (*fix*) are not doubled. There are always exceptions to every rule.)

"If there is an empty freight car, the train will not go and something needs to be done." The students will usually realize that another consonant needs to be written on the last freight car.

SAY: "Let us practice loading the other words on the train. " Either erase the letters on the train or draw more trains for the students to take turns loading on words. The students could do them on their own paper at their seats.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Pass out a practice sheet with several trains drawn on it in addition with a list of words to load. Use a variety of words adding some words that may not ride on the train.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Students find at least three words in a story they have

read that can ride the Short Line. Then they find three action words that may not ride on the train. Have them add *ing* to each of the three that may ride the train. **Do not use a worksheet.**

CLOSURE: Using techniques of teacher's choice, review the skill taught; short vowel sounding words that end with one vowel and one consonant need to have the final consonant doubled before adding a suffix; other sounds are never doubled.

Lois Meyer, Rose Garden Elementary School, Universal City, Texas

Blueberries for Sal—A Directed Reading Lesson

GRADE LEVEL: Second Grade or Third Grade

Using quality children's literature enables students to learn reading skills within a whole language environment. Rather than using isolated drills to teach skills, whole language lessons teach skills in the context of meaningful language usage. The teacher directs the learning in three areas—prereading, reading, and postreading. The purpose of this lesson is to help students identify details from a reading selection and identify characters' feelings and emotions.

FOCUS: Bring in fresh blueberries if possible, or if not, use frozen or canned ones. Have a map of the United States to locate Maine and pictures of its scenery. Let the children taste blueberries. Discuss where they come from. Explain the setting of Blueberries for Sal using the pictures and map.

MATERIALS: Copies of Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey for each child—blueberries—map of United State—pictures of Maine—practice sheets (The prereading portion of the lesson and A of the Reading portion comprise the instructional input of this lesson.)

Prereading

A. The anticipatory set has begins with the setting of the story. Expand on the children's prior knowledge of bears and being lost before reading the story.

B. Introduce the new vocabulary needed to understand the story: *struggled, clump, shy, hustle, tremendous, gasped, partridge*. Use sentences from the story to teach the vocabulary in a meaningful context.

Reading

A. Give the students the following purpose for reading: Read to find out what happens when a little girl and a little bear get lost from their mothers.

B. Allow the students to read the story silently first. Rereading the story orally with a partner may be done next. Monitor students as they read, giving assistance if needed.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Use questions such as the following to provide time for guided oral reading.

1. Read what Mother says to Little Sal about why they are picking blueberries.
2. Read what Little Bear's mother told him about why they are eating blueberries.
3. Read about the noise Little Sal heard when she was looking for her mother.

Postreading

A. Discuss questions such as the following:

1. How old do you think Little Sal is?
2. What happened to Little Sal's berries?
3. How do you think Little Sal felt when she could not find her mother?
4. What did Mother do after she found Little Bear following her?

B. Children could write about their own experiences being lost or about what Little Sal or Little Bear might do on another day.

C. After a lesson on onomatopoeia and the words in the story that are onomatopoeic, children could practice dropping different items into different containers and trying to write words that describe the sounds they hear.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:

A. Students complete the following exercises. Match the meaning of the vocabulary word to its definition.

1. struggled	a. very large or great
2 clump	b. a bird that is hunted as game
3. shy	c. to make a great effort
4. hustle	d. easily frightened; bashful
5. tremendous	e. a group or bunch
6. gasped	f. to move or do something very quickly
7. partridge	g. to draw in air suddenly or with effort

B. Answer the following questions.

1. Little Sal is probably _____years old.
   a. 10 ; b. 4; c. 1 ; d. 12.
2. Little Sal's and Little Bear's mothers went to pick blueberries because:
   a. they needed food for winter ; b. they had nothing else to do ; c. they were afraid all the blueberries would be gone soon; d. they liked blueberries more than anything else.
3. What did little Sal do with her berries?

a. Eat them ; b. Spill them; c. Throw them away; d. Can them.

4. Why do bears need to grow big and fat?

a. To make a bigger bearskin rug; b. To scare people; c. To store up food for the long, cold winter; d. So they can win fights with other bears.

5. One way Little Sal and Little Bear were different is:

a. Little Sal got lost and Little Bear did not ; b. Little Sal used a pail and Little Bear did not; c. Little Sal liked blueberries and Little Bear did not ;d. Little Sal went to pick blueberries with her mother and Little Bear did not.

C. Match the noise to the correct person.

1. kuplink, kuplank, kuplunk	a. Mother Crow
2. caw, caw, caw	b. Mother Bear
3. munch, munch, munch	c. Little Sal

CLOSURE: This lesson will take more than one day to complete. A culminating activity would be to cook something with blueberries. Let the children locate recipes using blueberries from various cookbooks and decide what they would like to make. Children can copy the recipe and display it in the room. This provides another opportunity to read a meaningful text. The children's stories should be displayed in the room so that the children can read them also. Recreating a map of Blueberry Hill and tracing Little Sal's and Little Bear's paths could coincide with social studies also.

Sandra Mayo, Hollibrook Elementary School, Houston, Texas

A Following Tour of China

GRADE LEVEL: Second through Fifth Grades

"We're on our way! Gung hey fat choi," (good health to all), welcomes your class to the fascinating culture of China.

Our tour began on the first day with a Reading Rainbow video (PBS reading series #107). Its theme was Chinese New Year, and it portrayed the animated story of Liang and the Magic Paintbrush by Demi. By listening to and following the directions of a magician, Liang can make his paintings come to life.

This is the second lesson of a week-long experience in following multistep directions. "Today, we will focus on listening skills and manipulate Chinese tangrams (a Chinese puzzle consisting of a square cut into five triangles, a square, and a rhomboid to be reassembled into different figures) according to oral directions."

After discussing the need for good listening skills, and how that applies in class, I relate how our tour today can be like Liang's paintbrush. Listening is a gift; there

is magic once we fully understand something.

FOCUS: I used an Oriental gong. This fascinated the children and led us into a special feeling about the lesson. A large print of a Chinese dragon snaps into view after I pop the wall map up from in front of it. After a brief introduction on why listening is important, I illustrate the objective of the day's lesson by placing a puff of smoke next to the dragon's mouth. Orange paper is cut into smoke shapes and each day's skill is written on them. By the end of the week, we have a skill-breathing dragon as a reference.

MATERIALS: 1. Tour Guide: - A packet of skill sheets or a single illustration of the day's theme or exercise. Today's guide is a picture of a tangram.
2. A package of plastic tangrams.
3. 12 x 18 construction paper (enough for each child).

GUIDED PRACTICE: The students work with the tangram illustration. Each of the seven pieces is named by shape and given a simple code. A square could be shown as Sq. or simply S. After studemts cut out their tangram pieces, give them about 4 minutes to try and fit them back into a square. You can assist them only by encouraging their attempts. Keep to the limited time and discuss their problems. Relate the tangram puzzle to models or other products requiring assembly. A set of clear, easy to follow directions is an important tool for success.

Use an overhead projector to demonstrate the correct sequence of placing the pieces together. You may want to practice several times before you show the students. On the first demonstration, give oral directions along with the visual. Limit this activity to about 7 minutes. Explain the same procedure giving directions orally. Your students must listen carefully as you explain the details.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:1. Students arrange their plastic tangrams into an interesting pattern and write out clear directions for someone to follow.
2. Use the piece of construction paper to hide the pattern from a partner. Fold the paper to form a tent and place it between students.
3. Students work with an assigned partner and take turns reading and following the directions each has written. Explain that time is limited and each person can work for only a specified amount of time.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: I used knowledge gained today as the basis for a homework assignment.
1. Students use their paper tangrams to create an original animal or letter design.
2. Suggest that they paste the 7 pieces onto another piece of paper so parts are not lost.

3. Write out clear directions for assembling their design.
4. We will share as many designs as possible the next day.

CLOSURE: Depending on time, and the pace of your lesson, closure could take place after the guided practice.

1. Make positive statements about the day's activities.
2. Relate how important listening is to learning new skills or understanding what someone is trying to say.
3. Briefly introduce tomorrow's lesson. "Our tour ends for now. We will be exploring the symbols of China and learning how to write in Chinese."
4. "Like Liang's magic paintbrush, listening will bring magic to your world and add life to your work."

As a treat, I offer a taste of things to come by serving fortune cookies with my own special message inside!

Emilie Harris, Voigt Elementary, Round Rock, Texas

Drawing Mind Pictures

GRADE LEVEL: Third Grade

Each year I'm faced with developing exciting, attention- grabbing activities for writing lessons. As a third grade teacher, I focus on informative, narrative, and descriptive writing. Of the three, descriptive writing poses the most problems for students. Many times they confuse descriptive writing with narrative writing. They do not use sequence or organization in their papers. The students "skip" all over trying to hit upon everything—not minding the order of the piece. This lesson has helped eliminate many of these problems.

FOCUS: The students describe a given picture thoroughly and sequentially.

MATERIALS: Three pictures (you may draw them yourself or use preprinted examples — preferably simple pictures.) Copy one of the three pictures for the students. Two pieces of blank paper per child. Pencils, crayons, or markers. Chalkboard and colored chalk.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Begin with a discussion of the term *describe*. Have one of the students look up the meaning in the dictionary. Use the thesaurus to find homonyms of the term. Inform the students when they describe someone or

something, they want the reader to get an accurate "mental picture." In order to achieve this, the students must start in one area and follow in a logical order. Discuss the use of adjectives to enhance the description. Have a volunteer from the class come to the front of the room. Tell the students they are going to describe this person. Using the colored chalk, start with the person's head. Have the students list the parts of the head to describe hair: eyes, nose, and so forth. Next, using a different colored chalk, list the parts of the body to be described. Finally, do the same for the legs. Now ask the students to look at the list. You may ask them if they see the order or sequence they are following.

Distibute a piece of the blank paper to each student. Tell them this time they are going to draw a picture of the description that you will be giving them. Describe one of the pictures to the students. However, on this first picture, provide an example of an unsequenced description. For example, describe the middle of the picture, then skip to the top, then to the bottom. After you are finished, have the students share their drawings. Show them the picture you just described. Briefly discuss why their pictures do not resemble the original. Remind the students that sequence is essential in writing a clear description. Discuss bland adjectives to avoid such as *ugly, pretty, good.* Now pass out the second piece of blank paper. Describe the second picture using sequence and clear,specific adjectives. After finishing, again have the students share their drawings. They should be closer to the original. Finally, compare the two drawings. Ask the students what was different about the two. What made the second drawing easier?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Pass out the third picture to the students. Now they write a description of the picture. Remind the students to make a description that will provide the reader with a clear mental image. As a prewriting activity, encourage the students to list the characteristics of the picture.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Have the students read their descriptions to a partner. While listening to their partner's description, the student should check if he/she can imagine the picture his/her partner is describing.

CLOSURE: Brainstorm with the students to review the elements of concise descriptive writing discussed in the lesson.

Cindy McCorkle, Dolores B. Linton Elementary, San Antonio, Texas

Glorious Geometric Gadgets

GRADE LEVEL: Third through Fifth Grades

This art activity is an integrated writing project that incorporates language arts, geometry, social studies, and science. A variety of multicolored geometric shapes serve as the catalyst for a cumulative and culminating endeavor. Children's observations of the community from the social studies curriculum and the study of machines from the science curriculum will be bonded together with the language arts component serving as grout.

FOCUS: The initial focus is the identification and organization of a variety of geometric shapes and colors to design a machine that would be useful in the community.

MATERIALS: bright multicolored, pre-cut geometric shapes: circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, ellipses, and rhombuses
black construction paper 12" x 14"
a variety of trade books on machines
A Light in the Attic by Shel Silverstein
glue
scissors

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Identify and discuss the integrated variety of geometric shapes in the illustration for Shel Silverstein's poem, "The Homework Machine." Read the poem and discuss the idea of a homework machine. Invite students to brainstorm some of the needs for their community. List these ideas on paper for the group to be able to read.

2. The teacher reviews the names and colors of the geometric shapes with the children. This is particularly beneficial for ESL and LEP students. Second-language extensions could likewise be provided for English speaking students.

3. Criteria for the assignment is established and written on the board. Students will refer to the list as they work on their projects.

Criteria:

EACH machine must have at least
1. three different geometric shapes AND
2. three different colors.
3. The machine must be mechanical and original.

DO NOT glue pieces onto paper until after the criteria has been verbally verified with a classmate or teacher. For example, "My three geometric shapes are. . . . My three colors are. . . ."

The children may use as many pieces as they choose, but a minimum of three colors and three geometric shapes is to be represented. The number of attributes for the activity is arbitrary.

4. The teacher demonstrates the desired process by designing a simple machine

to meet the criteria listed on the board. The teacher then invites students to verbally verify if the criteria were met. Finally, the teacher glues the geometric shapes onto the black paper.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The students select the geometrical pieces they want to use and work independently to design their geometrical gadgets. The teacher walks around the classroom encouraging, listening and helping children verify if the basic criteria has been met.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Upon completion of the art piece, each student writes a detailed description of the machine and its functions. The writing is to be shared orally within small groups.

CLOSURE: Make an alliteration about the machine that is to include two or more of the following: a title, a location, onomatopoeia, three describing words (adjectives). EXAMPLE: My marvelous menacing Moogy ma,ma,ma mashes messy mulch in McAdoo. Attach the alliteration to the finished piece of art.

Nina C. S. MacKellar, Lackland City Elementary, San Antonio, Texas

How Tall is Tall?

GRADE LEVEL: Fourth Grade

Children naturally love tall tales and exaggeration, so I spend several days reading and showing films about tall tales. Then we discuss what exaggeration is and how it is used in stories to expand the truth. I point out that many tall tales are about real people,but as the stories were handed down and retold, they grew and grew and grew (example: Davy Crockett). The objective is to introduce students to the fun of using exaggeration in creating stories.

MATERIALS: Poster of Muscles Malone, cut up and laminate a colorful Texas calendar, story of "Muscles Malone," paper, pencils, drawing paper, colors.

FOCUS: "Today we are going to talk about exaggeration in stories and experiment with using it to write our own stories." Show the poster of Muscles Malone. Read the tall tale of "Muscles Malone."

TEACH: Discuss "Muscles Malone" and how exaggeration was used in the story. Discuss the fact the Muscles Malone is a chicken.

GUIDED PRACTICE: What other Texas animals could be used? Brainstorm.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Distribute paper and have students create their own characters.

CLOSURE: Share characters. What did we learn today?

DAY 2

TEACH: Review. Show pictures of possible Texas settings (Texas calendars are great). Laminate the characters from the day before and have them displayed on the chalkrail or a bulletin board. Also display the setting pictures.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Discuss what a character might do in a certain setting. Have students suggest some ways to exaggerate a situation.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students may choose any of the characters to write about. Next they choose a setting. Add exaggeration and create a tall tale. Have fun! Share with a group.

Questions for groups to discuss:

1. Does the story have exaggeration? (not enough, fine, too much)
2. Does the story have a logical sequence?
3. Does the story have a good beginning and ending?

CLOSURE: What did we learn? Do you need to make any changes?

DAY 3

Proofread and edit stories. The members of the group help each other. Rewrite.

DAY 4

Set up an editing circle to check for: title, date, name, exaggeration, a good beginning, a good ending. Make corrections.

CLOSURE: What did we learn about exaggeration? Was it as easy to use as you thought it would be? Did you have fun? What would you tell someone else about writing a tall tale?

THE STORY OF MUSCLES MALONE

There once lived the rootinest, tootinest cowpoke this side of the Pecos. His

name was Muscles Malone and the earth quaked when he walked. He looked so fearsome that beetles trembled and hid on the underside of leaves and rattlesnakes burrowed into their holes when he passed by.

Even though this tough hombre could scare the rattles off of a snake, Muscles Malone was a good-hearted fellow and never hesitated to right a wrong or help someone in need.

Now it happened that Muscles and his horse Pokey were poking along on a plain old day with no place in particular to plant themselves when a plaintive cry pierced the air. Ever alert, his prudent ear picked up the sound.

"Help, help! Save me!" he heard.

"What in tarnation is going on?" he thought to himself. His eagle eye roamed the restless region with relentless vision.

"Hold on Pokey, what have we here?" Muscles said as his eyes zeroed in on a fair damsel in distress.

The young girl was riding at breakneck speed in front of a herd of charging buffalo. Muscles quickly jumped to the ground and stomped on the parched earth causing it to break apart. A fault opened down the hill. It formed a deep gully between the girl and the herd that stopped the herd. Dust rose from the stomping hooves as the herd came to a screeching halt. The herd looked around at each other in disbelief and then at the gully that yawned before them. They swung their heads in confusion.

On the other side, the girl came to a halt. She turned in her saddle and looked up to the hill where Muscles stood. She smiled and waved her hanky in salute and continued on her way in safety. A satisfied Muscles watched her disappear into the sunset.

Muscles got on Pokey and rode down to the snorting herd that was pacing the gully trying to find a way across. Muscles immediately spied the leader, a big beastly buffalo. The behavior of the beasts was very bad because their game of chase was gone.

Billy, the lead buffalo, was snorting and ready to do battle with Muscles. He bowed his head and snorted in anger. The heard recognized Muscles as a brave cowpoke and opened a path for him. They would let Billy handle this.

Muscles squared his shoulders and sat up straighter on Pokey. He slowly and calmly rode up to Billy. He stared into Billy's eyes. Billy became dazed and settled down. Muscles reached out, grabbed a horn and rubbed it. He petted Billy on the head. He scratched behind Billy's ears and around his horns until Billy almost purred. The herd looked on beguiled. Muscles had won them over.

They set up camp on the edge of the gully. Muscles pecked out a big hole. He then lassoed a nearby cloud and shook the water out of it to make a pool for the buffalo to swim.

They had a barbeque on the plain amid the bluebonnets and began a beautiful

friendship beneath the Texas sky.

(This is an original tall tale by Virginia Braddock.)

Virginia Braddock, Oak Hills Terrace Elementary, San Antonio, Texas

Writing Off the Menu

GRADE LEVEL: Fourth and Fifth grades

Children enjoy applying the skills they've learned to solve problems encountered in everyday life. The adding and subtracting of decimals becomes meaningful with applied to the experience of dining in a restaurant. Combining this application with the use of story writing further enhances the learning activity. The student not only applies the skills taught in school but the writing challenges their creativity and enables them to personalize the experience thus making it a more valuable learning activity.

FOCUS: I told my students that over the next few days they'd be using their writing skills to problem solve with decimals. First, an oral discussion followed in which a variety of questions were asked. "Have you ever eaten in a restaurant? Which ones? What did you do when you got there? What did you do to make it a more pleasant experience? " Then, we talked about the type of decisions made before going to a restaurant. A group of people must determine where they can go for the amount of money they have to spend and what is appropriate to wear.

MATERIALS: Restaurant menus and slips of paper with amounts written on one set and guests' names written on another set.

GUIDED PRACTICE: I obtained outdated menus from a restaurant in town and passed one out to each child. We spent a few minutes discussing it. Then each child came up and selected two slips. One slip told them how much to spend, and the other slip told them what guests they could take along. They were given the option of making up their own guest list as long as it didn't exceed four friends. Next, the children wrote a restaurant adventure including the following elements: tell how the group decided on a restaurant; what they ordered (keeping in mind the amount of money they had to spend); how much change they received, if any. An attached sheet which shows each guest's order and total cost should accompany the story.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The children write stories incorporating the guidelines given. The teacher monitors and conferences with anyone who requests

a conference.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Each child uses the information from his/her writing to formulate a story problem. Then class members exchange papers and solve each other's story problems.

CLOSURE: Upon completion of the stories, I ask for volunteers to share theirs with the class. A discussion follows centering on the problems they encountered and how they approached solving them. The children also came up with other situations from everyday life in which they'd have to use decimals.

My students had a good time with this activity. Their stories were inventive; and, at the same time, they addressed the elements I asked for.

Jeanne M. Brown, Gregorio Esparza Elementary, San Antonio, Texas

WDS Chart

GRADE LEVEL: Chapter 1 reading—Fourth and Fifth Grades

The Word-Definition-Sentence (WDS) Chart evolved as I tried unsuccessfully to make vocabulary meaningful for my Chapter 1 fourth and fifth graders. These students can easily look up a word in a dictionary and copy the definition without having any idea of the word's meaning or how to use it. My students needed ownership of the vocabulary words instead of just exposure to them. The WDS Chart and its use grew out of this dilemma. We used the chart as both a learning tool and a study guide.

FOCUS: The students learn meaningful definitions to vocabulary words and use these same words in context.

MATERIALS: Vocabulary word list
Glossary or dictionary for each student
WDS Chart (teacher or student made)
Chalkboard and chalk

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Provide each student with a WDS Chart. (Teacher also must have one for modeling.)

2. Write six to ten vocabulary words on the board and pronounce each one. The students should repeat the words orally.

3. The students and teacher then write the first word in the "Word" column.

Students look up that word in their glossaries or dictionaries. When every student has located it, the teacher chooses one student to read the definition(s) orally. The teacher should then read the same word in context from the reader or text. The class discusses the definition and the word's use in the text. Allow the students to decide upon a "kid-talk" definition to write in the "Definition" column. Both students and teacher write this definition on their chart. Continue the procedure until each word has a "kid-talk" definition.

4. Have the class collaborate on a sentence for the first word. (This sentence should reflect the students' understanding of the word.) Students write this sentence in the "Sentence" column.

5. Arrange the students in dyads or triads. Each group should make up a sentence for each word to write in the "Sentence" column. Every child in the group must write the sentence on his/her paper.

6. After an appropriate amount of time, reassemble the whole group. Choose volunteers to read two or three sentences for each word.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:1. By folding back the "Word" and "Sentence" columns, the student can use the WDS Chart as a study guide. The learner can read the definition then recite the correct word for that meaning.

2. If the student folds the "Word" and the "Definition" columns back, he/she can read the sentence and then recall the meaning of the vocabulary word.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: 1. When appropriate, the students can include some of these words in their own pieces during writing time.

2. The students should look in books, magazines, or newspapers at home for these words and bring them to share with the class.

CLOSURE: 1. To check for understanding, the students fold the "Definition" and "Sentence" columns back to view the "Word" column. The teacher reads the "kid-talk" definition aloud. The students respond orally.

2. If the students have difficulty remembering a word, the teacher also reads the sentence from the text saying "blank" for the vocabulary word.

I realized the chart's success when these words appeared later in the students' oral language and in the stories they had written.

Susan Partida, Tyler, Texas

Haiku

GRADE LEVEL: Fifth Grade

When I saw my students had difficulty comprehending haiku because it was so different from the poetry they knew, I introduced creative dramatics into the lesson. Creative dramatics allows each student to become his or her own character. Everyone participates, so there is no audience.

FOCUS: 1. Tell students they will learn how to write and understand a special type of poetry from Japan, called "haiku."

2. Write the word *haiku* on the board and read a few examples of haiku.

3. Ask, "How is it different from the poetry you know?"

4. List the students' responses on the board.

5. Using their list, help them generate another list of characteristics of haiku. (There are three lines. The first line contains five syllables; the second seven; the third five. Haiku usually deals with nature.)

6. Have them write this list and an example of haiku from the board for their notes.

MATERIALS: Haiku example for the board. Haiku lines on strips of index cards (Have several different haiku typed onto index cards. Cut the cards into strips so that one line of haiku is on each strip.) Complete haiku on index cards, white construction paper. India ink, drinking straws, sponges, paints (pink, green, red, orange, yellow), writing paper, pen.

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. At this point since students have an idea about haiku, they need to experience it.

2. Give each child one of these strips and tell the students to find the other two people whose strips will complete their haiku.

3. Within their group of three, they are to sequence their strips.

4. They are to create a pantomime to act out the haiku.

5. After ten minutes, have each group take turns doing their skit while the teacher reads their haiku aloud.

6. Because there are no words, the peacefulness of the haiku becomes obvious to the students watching, evidenced by a quiet hush and soft "ohs" and "ahs."

7. Collect the haiku strips.

8. Then give each group another index card with a complete haiku on it. (There are series of haiku put together to form a story available. I found one entitled "Spring." Each card has a number on it.)

9. After allowing several minutes for the groups to create a pantomime for the

haiku, place the groups sequentially (according to the number on their index card) into a large circle around the room.

.10. As each group enacts their haiku in a continuous flow around the circle the teacher reads the corresponding haiku. (With our haiku "Spring," we observed the tranquil progression of early spring to late spring to early summer.)

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: 1. Have the students return to their seats.

2. Tell them they are going to paint a picture and write a haiku to go with it.
3. Give each child a drinking straw and a piece of white construction paper.
4. In the middle of each page, place a large drop of India ink.
5. Tell the students to blow the ink with their straws.
6. As the ink branches up the page, the shape of a bare tree forms.
7. Tell the students this is a winter tree.
8. Have them write a haiku about it on the page and title it "Winter."
9. Give each child another sheet of paper and have them make another tree.
10. This time give them sponges to dip into pink paint and dab onto the bare branches.
11. Ask them what season this is. Whey they respond that it is spring, have them write a haiku about spring at the bottom of the page and title it "Spring."
12. Do the same with green paint for summer and yellow, orange, and red paint for autumn.
13. These pictures, when dry, can be made into a book and shared with the rest of the class.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: 1. Have the students write a haiku on the subject of their choice.

2. Allow them to form groups of threes to prepare a pantomime of one of the haikus chosen from within the group.
3. After several minutes, each group presents their haiku to the class while a student reads the corresponding haiku aloud.

CLOSURE: Ask and discuss the following:

1. What is haiku?
2. How is it different from the poetry you are used to?
3. How are they similar?
4. Which poetry do you prefer?
5. Do you perceive Japan differently now?
6. How so?
7. What do you think we can learn from the Japanese style of haiku?

Laurie Krampe Hackett, Carlos Coon Elementary, San Antonio, Texas

La Llorona: Hispanic Spook

GRADE LEVEL: Fifth Grade

Fascination with the macabre, death, and sorrow has long been a part of Hispanic tradition most clearly seen in its art but existing in the music and folk tales of this rich culture as well. This lesson, the first of a two-week series leading up to Halloween, meshes Hispanic culture with American Halloween into a unit dealing with the shadowy side of life.

Many times Hispanic culture units focus around the Sixteenth of September or the Fifth of May. This is offered as an alternative.

The lesson uses a traditional folk tale told in Hispanic circles, so many children know it already. Because of its gruesomeness, I usually reserve it for fifth grade and send a letter home with the students explaining the nature of the unit. With modification, it could conceivably be used in second through fifth.

FOCUS: 1. Teacher dresses up like La Llorona or displays a La Llorona costume. S/he has a red cellophaned flashlight in hand, turned on, and the lights are dimmed. (A "campfire" can also be set up around which to gather.)

2. The teacher informs the students that they are going to hear about a "spook" that hispanic people say—even today—haunts the barrios and neighborhoods.

3. The class discusses the startling events that make this story seem lifelike.

4. Students also discuss the main idea, characters, sequencing of events, tone/feeling, and other elements that make the story suspenseful.

MATERIALS: 1. Costume of La Llorona (This could be a flowing, silky material with a gray witch's wig or a traditional witch's costume sans hat.)

2. Flashlight with red cellophane, logs for a campfire

3. Pencil and paper

4. Stories That Must Not Die, Vol. 1 by Juan Sauvageau, Oasis Press, 1975.

GUIDED PRACTICE:1. Teacher tells the students to get pencil and paper ready, then come to the campfire.

2. After stating the objectives, the teacher reads the story of "La Llorona"to the students.

3. The teacher leads a discussion of the important story elements. Some questions might be:

a. Can anyone tell me the story in his or her own words? (sequencing of events -- knowledge, comprehension);

b. Did you like the story? Can you give me a reason for your opinion? (evaluation);

c. What is the meaning of the story? What is the author really trying to tell you? (main idea, comprehension);

d. What lesson can we learn from the story? (application);

e. What can you tell me about the characters and their qualities? (character analysis);

f. What kinds of things in the storymake you feel sad? (tone/mood);

g. Do you know a different version of the story? (Let them tell it briefly. Because this is a folk tale, the versions may vary from place to place.)

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Teacher instructs the students to return to their desks and use the paper to record their feelings about the story and the discussion.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Restating the objectives, the teacher asks if anyone would like to share the feelings they have written. S/he accepts two or three, depending on time, collects papers and offers the following challenge:

"Boys and girls, there are many 'spooky' stories in the Hispanic culture. Most stories have been passed down from grandparents to parents to children. These folk tales might be sad ones, like "La Llorona," but they might also include happy events. I would like to challenge you to ask your parents, grandparents , aunts or uncles to tell you a story that has been told for many years in your family. Write down some key words to help you remember it; and, when you return to class tomorrow, you may retell it, or you may take the time to write out the story and read it to the class. You will be the storyteller tomorrow!"

The teacher should caution the students that the stories may not be a repeat of some scary story from television or movies, nor can they be gross, obscene, or offensive

Students leave the class super-motivated and the two days are usually spent hearing about "La Lechusa," "Don Pedrito Jaramillo," folk cures and remedies.

CLOSURE: Students sing the song of "La Llorona" (available in public libraries) and discuss the images in it. Monday of the following week (Halloween week) students discuss "Dia de Los Muertos" and the customs in the Hispanic world, such as making special foods and leaving these on the graves of deceased family members. Also, they discuss the selling of plastic miniature skeletons, skulls, masks and the like. This discussion leads into the American Halloween, comparing and contrasting the traditions. Pupils are introduced to cinquains and asked to write several in English or Spanish relating to either cultural tradition.

Students walk taller, show an enhanced self-esteem having had their culture validated and take with them an appreciation of folk tales as carriers of culture.

Mary F. B. Garza, Deep Wood Elementary School, Round Rock, Texas

Poetry in Social Studies?

GRADE LEVEL: Fifth Grade (This activity can be adapted for almost any grade level or any unit of study.)

"All right, students, we are going to review for our test on transportation and communication today." This activity not only is an exciting way to review, but integrates writing poetry, reading skills, and language arts skills into your social studies or science classes. You'll find your students use higher level thinking skills which result in a strong feeling of accomplishment by each student.

MATERIALS: Set of study prints or large teaching pictures showing the history and development of transportation and communication, 9" X 12" construction paper, index cards.

FOCUS: 1. Display the set of study prints or pictures. (This can be on a bulletin board, chalkboard tray, or on various students' desks.)
2. Explain to students they will review their current unit of study in a different way. Suggest that they might be quite surprised with the result of this review.

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Let the students view the picture. Invite students to think about everything that they have studied about this picture/unit.

2. Put the picture where it can be seen, and have students brainstorm nouns suggested by the print. List these on the board. Then have students follow the same procedure for verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

3. Students prewrite a descriptive phrase or sentence about the picture using the word lists. Encourage vivid descriptive words that give facts, thoughts, and feelings.

4. Invite students to share their phrases aloud. Write the students favorite phrases on the board, overhead, or butcher paper.

5. Read these phrases back aloud. Next, students decide on the best order for a sequential flow to the phrases. Number these as students decide. You may want to suggest that if some of the words are repeated they can be left out, especially words like *the, a, an, and,* or redundant phrases.

6. Students usually are pleased with the way the writing sounds and suddenly realize that they have created a poem. Have someone write the poem on construction paper while the class decides on a title. Display the poem and study print on the bulletin board.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: 1. Divide the class into small groups .

2. Give each group a different study print or picture.

3. Students follow the same procedure: brainstorming nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Tell them to discuss facts they remember suggested by the prints to help them think of the best words for their lists.

4. Give each group enough index cards for each person in the group. They individually write a phrase or sentence on their card following the teacher's model. Remind them to use the most descriptive, vivid words they can.

5. When all are finished, the group displays the cards in front of them, and each one reads his or her phrase. They must decide on the best order for their poem and if any words are unnecessarily repeated.

6. Students then edit their phrase for spelling errors before someone transcribes it onto construction paper. Others decide on a title.

7. When groups are finished, each group shares its poem.

8. Display each poem and study print on the board as they are read.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: 1. Students choose a different print and write a poem of their own using the same procedure.

2. Students use a picture in their social studies text to produce a poem.

3. This same technique can be used with study prints, posters, or hands-on activities in science. (Poetry in the science lab is wonderful!)

4. In language arts, I have used vivid calendar pictures for this activity to encourage the use of rich descriptive language.

Sharon E. Borgh, Old Town Elementary, Round Rock, Texas

2 The Middle School Lessons

What one knows is, in youth, of little moment;
they know enough who know how to learn.
Henry Brooks Adams

The research of cognitive psychologists Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky support the notion that the adolescent thinks in what philogopher Susanne K. Langer calls "a new key." That is, there is a shift in the mind of the adolescent to a higher mode of thinking and a shift to different motif. This ability to deal with *what might be so* not merely with *what is* takes some getting used to, and middle school students need both time and direction during this critical transfomational period. The teachers who have written for this section understand the awkwardness of adolescence and appreciate the new mental powers of their students. They have indicated their sensitivity through these shared lessons.

Persuasion Techniques

GRADE LEVEL: Sixth through Eighth Grades

Persuasion techniques cannot successfully be taught by worksheets. To fully understand persuasion techniques, the student must see them in use. Students can easily detect that the bandwagon technique is used in statements such as, "Everyone eats at Ben's Restaurant. Do you?" But they do not realize the same technique is used in commercials that show masses of people gathering to buy a product.

This lesson actively incorporates listening in a variety of situations; determining a speaker's motive, bias, and point of view; engaging in creative dramatic activitie; adapting content and formality of oral language to fit the purpose and audience; recognizing various persuasion devises; writing for a variety of purposes and audiences; distinguishing between fact and nonfact; recognizing forms of propaganda; and distinguishing between fact and opinion.

FOCUS: Persuasion techniques taught in relation to daily experiences.

MATERIALS: The teacher needs examples of persuasion techniques written on the board or overhead to use as a review, a VCR and a tape of commercials, cassette

recorders, earphones, cassette tapes of radio commercials, and a video camera. The students need: magazines, newspapers, glue, scissors, paper, pen, poster board, and a set of laminated cards, with a persuasion technique written on each.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Begin the lesson with a review of the persuasion techniques. Read several examples and have the students respond by giving the type of technique used. Explain that they will watch a video tape of commercials and will hold up the correct response card for each technique viewed. The teacher uses the pause button between commercials to allow time for response and discussion. Since most commercials use several techniques, there is often more than one answer.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: After discussing the different commercials and the persuasion techniques used, discuss other places the techniques are found and their purposes. Include how the students themselves use persuasion techniques. For example, they often use bandwagon to persuade their parents to let them go somewhere ("But everyone will be there!"). The student will be given opportunities to see and hear other media use persuasion techniques. First, have the class listen to radio commercials in order to identify the techniques used. They make a collages of printed advertisements from newspapers or magazines. They may also make a book of advertisements which state the type of persuasion technique used and its intended audience The teacher encourages students to select a variety of persuasion techniques when looking for their advertisements.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Several extended practice activities may be used. One possible activity would require the students to work in groups to collect data. Each student is assigned a time and program to watch on television. They record the program's type of commercials, the techniques used, and its intendend audience. For example, one student might watch television during the Saturday morning cartoons while another watches it Saturday night. Another student may gather data during a Sunday afternoon ball game. They then draw conclusions from the various types of commercials by considering the time they were shown in relation to the viewing audience.

Another assignment requires the students to time the commercials during a thirty-minute television show and record the total. (The students love to tell their parents they they must watch television for homework!) In an additional extended activity, the students (alone or in groups) invent a product and develop a commercial for it using the persuasion techniques studied in class. The students perform their commercials for each other and/or video tape them.

CLOSURE: Ask questions such as: What persuasion techniques did we use today? Why are they used? Where were they used? Is it good or bad to use persuasion

techniques? By asking the students these questions, they can summarize and draw conclusions from the lesson.

Deborah L. Fey, J. Frank Dobie Intermediate School, Cibolo, Texas

O. Henry and Me

GRADE: Sixth Grade

This lesson will help the students use O. Henry and his short stories as a model for developing an original short story. The teacher leads the students through the writing process by developing comparison paragraphs and an original short story. The lesson begins by introducing O. Henry's biography and two of his short stories. Discuss how the characters in the short stories relate to his life. The students use this knowledge to write comparisons illustrating these similarities. Finally, they create characters (extending from their lives) to develop an original short story.

FOCUS: Creating short story characters extending from the students' lives.

MATERIALS: O. Henry's biography
"The Last Leaf"
"The Safecracker"

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Discuss O. Henry's biography.
2. Read and discuss O. Henry's short stories.
3. Analyze the short story as a model.
4. Prewrite a comparison of O. Henry's life to his characters.
5. Prewrite the characteristics of students' lives.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: 1. Writing comparisons of O. Henry's characters to his life.
2. Prewrite about characters extending from students' lives.
3. Prewrite a short story plot.
4. Write a rough draft of the short story.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: 1. Students create additional characters from their lives.
2. Students go through the writing process to develop an original short story extending from themselves.

CLOSURE: After students complete their original short stories, they share them

with the class. The students may even consider publishing their own class book. In all, the students feel a sense of accomplishment, and they are proud of their work.

Suzi Lockamy, Coke R. Stevenson Middle School, San Antonio, Texas

Life--One Hundred Years in the Future

GRADE LEVEL: Sixth Grade—Developmental Reading

This lesson serves as a prewriting activity for composing science fiction stories. It prompts students to predict what life might be like a hundred years from now. The lesson is collaborative so students may share creative ideas and is a part of a science fiction unit. The basal reader is the source for the stories.

FOCUS: Students work collaboratively to write an expressive/descriptive paper about a given aspect of future society.

MATERIALS: Each student is presented with an instruction sheet which includes group roles and the prompt for this activity.

Bradbury, Ray. "Time in Thy Flight." Portraits. Ed. Margaret Early. Dallas: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1987, 458-465

Clarke, Arthur C. "Saturn Rising." Portraits. Ed. Margaret Early. Dallas: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1987, 470-485

GUIDED PRACTICE: Students discuss pertinent elements of the science fiction stories they have read. Forexample in the story, "Time in Thy Flight," Bradbury tells aboutthe world in 1928 through the eyes of the children from the future. What did those Time Children think about the world of 1928? How do you know the children felt the way they did?

> "Saturn Rising" by Arthur C. Clarke is about a man, Morris Perlman, who has an idea for the future. Why did his plan seem unbelievable, even to the spaceship captain?

Close class discussion by relating the students' comments to the activity: "We have read stories about people's reactions to life in another time and place. Now you will have the opportunity to imagine life one hundred years from now."

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: A student is asked to read the prompt (a copy is given to each student).

Welcome aboard the time machine, the U.S.S. Ray Bradbury. The machine has been programmed to transport us to the year 2090. Geographically, we will be in the same area. Your group's task will be to describe an aspect of the society we find. A designated group member will report your recorded observations to the class. You will have thirty minutes for this activity.

Group 1: Describe the environment in the year 2090.
- What is the air and water quality?
- What does the land look like?
- Do you notice any plants or animals that are different from those in our time?
- Are there roads, streets, and highways?

Group 2: Describe the inhabitants you encounter in 2090.
- What is their physical appearance?
- What type of clothing are they wearing?
- Do you see different ages of inhabitants?
- How do the inhabitants behave towards you?

Group 3: Describe the technology in the year 2090.
- How do the inhabitants communicate?
- What type of transportation is used?
- How has their technology advanced beyond ours?

Group 4: Describe the system of education in 2090.
- Are there schools as we know them?
- Does everyone go to school?
- What subjects are taught in school?

Group 5: Tell the inhabitants in 2090 about our lifestyle.
- What do you think they would want to know about our environment, technology, and educational system?

GROUP ROLES:

Leader: The leader is accountable for having the finished project ready on time. Heor she reads the instructions to the group and gets them started on the project.

Recorder: The recorder writes the ideas expressed by group members.

Task Master: The task master keeps the group focused on the assignment, and gets them back on track should they wander away from the objective.

Praiser: The praiser encourages members to participate by making positive statements about their suggestions.

Presenter: The presenter reads the recorded observations to the class.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: From this activity students will develop their own science fiction stories.

CLOSURE: Summarize the presentations from this activity. Urge students to think more about what they would write in their own science fiction stories.

Elsie A. Bagley, Anson Jones Middle School, San Antonio, Texas

Broccoli Builds Character

GRADE LEVEL: Sixth through Eighth Grades

This lesson, which takes four to five class sessions, introduces characterization, and the methods an author uses to develop a character in a story. The students should already be familiar with how to distinguish major and minor characters. Other objectives include: finding the main idea, processing a composition using writing as a process, and peer editing.

MATERIALS: 1 whole stalk broccoli
heavy twine
enough broccoli florets to give 1 to each student
Manes, Stephen. "Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days" from Allington, Richard L., Ronald L. Cramer, Patricia M. Cunningham, G. Yvonne Perez, Constance Frazier Robinson, and Robert J. Tierney. Focus—Reading for Success: Bright and Beautiful. Glenview, Ill.: Scott Foresman and Co., 1985, 20-29.
or, Manes, Stephen. Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days. Clarion books/Tichnor and Fields, 1982. A film version of this book is also available.

FOCUS: On the first day, wear a broccoli necklace around your neck like Milo did in the story. Stand at your classroom door as students enter, but refuse to tell them the significance of the broccoli. Explain that they "will understand" before the end of class.

PROCEDURES: 1. Tell students by reading story/watching film, they will discover why a person might need or want to wear brocoli.

2. Tell students while they read/view they should pay special attention to what kind of people the characters are. Taking notes would be a good idea for students. List the names of the major characters on the board to aid students' concentration.

3. Read/view story. Stop students after introduction. Ask: "What is Milo's problem? " Allow students to respond and discuss their ideas.

4. Continue reading, stopping after each day's activities in the story. Have students write down Milo's task for each day, along with whatever lesson they think Milo was supposed to have learned from that task.

GUIDED PRACTICE: After finishing the story, ask the following questions:

a. What was Milo's problem at the beginning of the story?
b. What told you that he had that problem?
c. What was Milo supposed to learn from each day's lesson? Did he learn it? How do you know?
d. Does Milo have the same problem at the end of the story that he had at the beginning?
e. Is Milo the same at the end of the story that he was at the beginning? What is different about him? Is he perfect? Is he a better person? Why? How do you know?
f. What lesson does the author want us to learn from Milo's experiences?

Elicit the ways in which an author tells readers about a person's character. Emphasize that a person's character often has very little to do with his/her physical appearance, that character is personality. Hopefully the class's list will include: what the character says, what the character does, ways in which other characters act toward the character, and what other characters say to and about the character. Emphasize, using the students' own notes, that these are the four ways they learned about Milo's character.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Divide the class into four groups. Each group lists three or four specific examples from the story for each of the methods of characterization listed above. Allow 10-15 minutes in groups.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Give each student a broccoli floret. Advise students that they are going to write a poem using the methods of characterization listed to express Milo's personality and show how he changed during the course of the story. Write these directions for a Milo poem on the board:

First verse will show how Milo was BEFORE he changed:
line 1: write one word that Milo said
line 2: write threewords showing something that Milo did
line 3: write five words that someone said to Milo
line 4: write seven words showing what someone did to Milo

Second verse will show how Milo as AFTER he changed:
line 5: write seven words showing what someone did to Milo

line 6: write five words that someone said to Milo
line 7: write three words showing something that Milo did
line 8: write one word that Milo said

HINT: It would probably be a good idea not to use complete sentences in your poem.

Students complete rough drafts of the poem at home. The broccoli floret is to remind them to do their homework, and they should take it home with them.

Each student checks his/her poem to see that it makes sense, follows directions, expresses Milo's personality, and is interesting. Then have the student get two other students to read the poem and check it in the same manner. Students should revise as necessary and advisable.

Students recopy the poem so that it is centered on the page and exhibits a diamond-shape. Poems may be published in a variety of ways, including bulletin-board display or class notebook.

CLOSURE: Read Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day to the class, emphasizing that they should notice how Alexander is like and unlike Milo. Allow brief discussion.

Linda G. Jackson Case, Edison Middle School, Houston, Texas

Poetry Project

GRADE LEVEL: Seventh Grade

The following two-week project originally designed for a seventh grade reading improvement class can be used in an average or accelerated class equally well as an introduction to a poetry unit or as closure for one. The students choose poets about whom they will find biographical data and the poets' poems which the students will read aloud in front of the class after practicing with peers and the teacher. Through this project, students learn how to:

apply contextual clues
use word structure analysis
use advanced dictionaries for word pronunciation
use advanced dictionaries for determining word meaning
summarize and make generalizations
recognize author's purpose, point of view, and opinion
follow written directions including substeps
use the card catalog and standard library references

vary rate of reading according to purpose.

MATERIALS: Checklist, interview form, list of poets on whom biographical information can be found in the library.

GUIDED PRACTICE: The students brainstorm questions they would ask a poet if he were present. They decide on a reporter's format to use in asking the questions. The teacher has this copied for use the next day. Paired students then use a similar format in a practice session as they interview each other. They have a total of 20 minutes, 10 minutes each to be the interviewer and the interviewee. They write up their interviews to share with the class.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The students use a checklist, which includes all the steps necessary for completion of the project.

STEPS FOR POEM PROJECT
Directions: Put a check mark by each step as it is completed.
NAME:
Date Project Due:
Pick a poem to read.
Biographical data collected
Introduction written including biographical data and summary of poem.
Practice reading introduction and poem aloud.
Check pronunciation of words not sure of.
Check meaning of unknown words.
Read aloud to a friend.
The reader: read with no mistakes in pronunciation.
read with meaning.
Listener's signature and date
Read aloud to the teacher.
The student: read with no mistakes in pronunciation.
read with meaning.
Teacher's signature and date
Attached are: (1) Data Sheet
(2) Written introduction
(3) Copy of poem
Read aloud to class.
Grades: Completion of check list.
Biographical data
Written introduction.
Read aloud in class

They also receive a data sheet which provides an outline for the student to follow in taking down information about their poets from reference sources.

Name:
POET PROJECT—BIOGRAPHICAL DATA
Directions: Fill in the information from reference sources.
Name of reference source:
Poet's Name:
Date Born:
Date Died:
Poet's Birthplace:
Other places poet lived:
Single or Married:
If Married, wife's name:
Children's names:
List any awards:
Name other poems by poet:

The students use these two forms to work alone during class periods and when working in pairs as the reader and/or listener. The students find the data in the library, and write a biographical sketch of their poets. They also summarize the meaning of the poem they are reading. They use this information to write an introduction which includes the poet's biographical data, the main idea of the poem, the title of the poem and the poet's name. When they practice with a peer, the reader has a responsibility to read with meaning and to enunciate the words clearly; the listener has the responsibility to make any corrections or to ask any questions.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: The students individually read their introductions and poems to the teacher as a final check before reading them in front of the class. Students can sign their names on the blackboard or pick numbers and work quietly at their desks until their turns come to read to the teacher. Then they read their introductions and poems to the class.

CLOSURE: The teacher directs class discussion on to problems the students encountered doing the project; to questions that might be added or subtracted from the data sheet; to steps that might be changed on the checklist; to how the students felt about the project—did they learn something new? did they have fun doing the project? what would they do differently or the same if they had another similar assignment.

Mary Lee Black, Belton Junior High, Belton, Texas

Bringing Map Skills to Life

GRADE LEVEL: Seventh Grade Reading

How do you raise graphic skills scores on tests? My students scores were low on compass directions and map scale. I wanted to (1) get them ready for tests, (2) give them a lesson that had immediate and practical application, and (3) design a hands-on experience with group interaction. I called the Victoria Chamber of Commerce for maps and was directed to First Victoria National Bank. The bank generously gave me thirty-two city maps which I laminated.

FOCUS: Give each student a map. Write the following on the board: "Find your school on the map. Then locate your home. With your finger, pen, or magic marker, trace the route from your home to your school. Using the scale on the map, determine how far your home is from the school. Have a neighbor check your answer."

MATERIALS: Classroom set of laminated city (or county) maps; felt tip pens or magic markers

GUIDED PRACTICE: Prepare a set of five to ten questions to do orally with class. Examples are

1. How many miles is your school from (another school)?
2. In which compass direction does your school face?
3. What is the name of the street in front of your school?
4. What point of interest is in block (G-8) of the map grid?
5. What is the name of the highway that goes through your town? In what directions (e.g., north-south) does the highway run?

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Tell students: "Get out a sheet of paper. Imagine you are riding your bicycle after school to meet a friend at the park (or other designated landmark). Trace the shortest route from your school to the park. Begin with the name of the street in front of the school and write clear directions to the park. For example: Go west on North Street for five blocks. Turn right on Stayton Street and go five blocks." Allow plenty of wait time for this activity. Then have one student come to the board to write the directions. This student will call on others for each part of the directions. If students seem to vary on the shortest route, get a class consensus of the best answer. Now have them figure mileage for this route. Tell them to check with a neighbor when they have finished. After wait time, call for a class consensus for mileage.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Students could plan field trips or school bus routes, either independently or in small groups. They should write clear directions, giving compass points. They should also figure approximate mileage using the map scale.

CLOSURE: Ask students this question: "What did you learn about maps today?" Build on their answers.

NOTE: This lesson could be modified for state maps or atlases. Students love actually using maps and computing mileage. You could expand the lesson to include figuring how much gasoline the trip would take. After students have answered a question, they should be allowed to check with neighbors to see if they have similar answers. This decreases anxiety and allows for peer tutoring. Be sure and allow plenty of wait time.

Margaret McCall Anderson, Patti Welder Intermediate School, Victoria, Texas

What's News?: Newspapers in the ESL Class

GRADE LEVEL: Seventh and Eighth Grades, English as a Second Language (ESL)

The composition of ESL classes reflects diversity and variety; they are usually multilingual, multicultural, and multilevel. All these factors necessitate a flexible lesson plan that has the potential to move from the known to the new/unknown and from the concrete to the abstract so that all the students' needs are addressed. This sample lesson plan on the newspaper possesses the flexibility required in an ESL class. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated in a hands-on format which is extremely helpful for the limited English proficient student (LEP) in the ESL classroom. Students are also involved in the writing process—pre-writing, exposure to and discussion of the newspapers; during writing, group writing, editing, and revising of their own pieces; and post writing, sharing their articles/features and placing them on the blank newspaper layout. Additionally, this lesson makes use of the students' background knowledge since English or foreign language newspapers are generally familiar and available to students in their homes. Thus, students are able to practice and expand the four skill areas with a familiar medium, the newspaper. Individual student interests and proficiency levels are also taken into account through the small group assignment and class discussion.

FOCUS: The teacher brings in examples of various types of newspapers, a daily and a weekly paper, as well as papers representing large urban areas, small towns,

high school/college, and so forth. Both English and foreign language newspapers are provided. The teacher passes these around for students to examine. Then a short class discussion focuses on the students' previous background with newspapers. Questions include the following:

Do your parents read the newspaper? Which one(s)?
Do you read the newspaper? Which one(s)?
What is in a newspaper?
Why do people read papers?
What do you look for in the paper? What part do you like to read?
How are these papers similar/different?

MATERIALS: Various English and foreign language newspapers
A class set of one newspaper
A transparency with an enlarged index from the newspaper
A blank, butcher paper layout for a newspaper divided into sections and pages and taped along the wall or board

GUIDED PRACTICE: Pass out the class set of newspapers. Then utilizing a transparency with an enlarged index from the papers distributed to the students, go over the various sections of the paper and have students locate specified topics/sections such as sports, comics, classified, horoscope, Dear Abby. Teach vocabulary related to the index and newspaper, such as *editorial, entertainment, classified, advertisement*. As a class, construct a web diagram/semantic map on the board with newspaper as the center, branching out with the various sections as subcategories and discussing the types of information available in each.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Group students according to individual interests and/or proficiency and have them write their own feature for a class newspaper. This activity allows for varying levels of language proficiency as some students could write a feature news story while others could write short classifieds or illustrate and come up with captions for an ad display. Each group will be responsible for writing, proofing, and editing each piece.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Once the final versions are ready, the groups will appropriately place their pieces according to specified sections/topics on the large blank newspaper layout in front of class. Each group will discuss why their article/feature belongs in that section of the newspaper. Then the entire class will fill in the index for their newspaper, indicating page numbers of the various stories, etc.

CLOSURE: The class summarizes the uses for newspapers and the various types of newspapers available. Additionally, the class discusses other types of indexes

they have seen and used, how these are similar or different, and how they can help a person locate needed information more efficiently.

Nancy L. Hadaway & Liola Florez, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

Introduction to American Folk and Tall Tales

GRADE LEVEL: Eighth Grade

To begin my unit on American Folk and Tall Tales, I like to get my students personally involved. We discuss lifestyles of the 18th and 19th centuries. Next, we focus on when and how their ancestors came to American and finally to Texas. We do prewriting on family traditions, ethnic contributions, or "How I Came to Texas." Students go home to interview family members "to fill in the blanks" in their prewriting. The objective is to discover the contributions made to the United States and Texas by various ethnic groups, especially the learner's own.

GUIDED PRACTICE: The class brainstorms possible lifestyles during the 18th and 19th centuries such as living conditions, entertainment, transportation, clothing, education, and jobs. Write all ideas on the board.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students free write what they actually know and suppose/guess about why and how your ancestors/relatives came to the United States. Students recount how and why their families came to Texas. What did they find here? What did they bring with them in terms of customs, traditions, food, and clothing? Drawings of these items, maps representing the journeys, or phrases in other languages may be included.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Students prewrite about the background of their family traditions, their ethnic contributions to the United States and Texas, or "How I Came to Texas."

CLOSURE: Sitting in the author's chair,students read their prewriting to the class. The teacher lists unique items from each paper on the board.

FOLLOW-UP: Students interview family members. This paper may be developed into a reflexive piece that is built upon during the study of this unit. Often my students will bring family pictures, articles of clothing, or traditional foods to share.

Teresa Zaragoza, Killough Middle School, Houston, Texas

Appositives

GRADE LEVEL: Eighth Grade

Most eighth grade students are aware of appositives and can identify them if there are commas used in the sentence. However, few students use the appositive in their actual writings. In this lesson the students review what an appositive is, but more importantly they discover how they can effectively use them in their writing.

MATERIALS: 1. Any text with examples of appositives.
2. Examples of sentence combining exercises using appositives can be shown.
3. Two teacher-made exercises. "Hinkie Pinkie" is used as a sponge exercise. Make several sentences in which the rhyming answers are also examples of appositives. Example: The escaped gander, a loose goose, wasn't caught until after Sunday's lunch. Make a fill-in story by writing a story in which appositives can be added. Beginnings of such stories might read: The novel....is most exciting. The hero. . . must save the beautiful girl from the villains....

FOCUS: Students are given a copy of the "Hinky Pinkie" to solve. After several minutes, give the solution. The answers are examples of the lesson's objective.

GUIDED PRACTICE: State the objective of the lesson and give a definition of an appositive. Discuss the examples of appositives from the text you use. Orally work the exercises from any available material using individual response, choral response, or group response when appropriate.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The fill-in story can be worked individually as the students add appositives to the story provided.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: The exercises on sentence combining use several levels of learning, including the evaluation level. Using the overhead to write examples of the same sentence gives students a chance to see how different wording can change the effectiveness of the sentence. The teacher may have to help the students by giving examples, but soon the students begin to grasp for themselves which sentences are better written. From these exercises the students not only learn to write more effectively, but they learn to judge the quality of the written word.

CLOSURE: Restate the definition of an appositive and have several students give examples.

Meloney Ferguson, Longview, Texas

Dead Cats and Self-Esteem

GRADE LEVEL: Eighth Grade

Dead cats and self-esteem don't seem to have much in common. However, reading Judith Viorst's The Tenth Good Thing About Barney to middle school students and allowing them to write personal responses can develop writing and listening skills and raise student self-esteem. Middle school adolescents, especially those in below-level classes who have experienced one or more years of failure, relate this story of a mother helping her child resolve his grief over his pet's death to their own emotional changes and need for support. My first writing assignment is designed to make students aware of their good qualities and ease them into writing a non-threatening assignment which allows them to write about themselves. This can led to a better attitude toward themselves, English class, and school.

FOCUS: Use one or more of the following questions to focus the lesson:
How many of you have had a pet die?
What did you do or what could you do to get over your grief?
What did you do or what could you do to help other family members ease their loss?
Read aloud The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst.

MATERIALS: The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst, a chalkboard or overhead projector, chalk or overhead pens, paper and pen or pencil.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Ask the students to write sentences naming ten good things about themselves in response to the story. Give and elicit examples of good things such as physical features; skills in athletics, music, or art; creative talents (sewing, cooking, woodworking); and awards students have earned. Have students prewrite by listing quickly as many good things about themselves as possible. Encourage students to use these lists as they begin writing complete sentences about themselves. Because students often want to write short choppy sentences such as "I have nice eyes" or "I'm good in baseball," take time at this point to help the student go beyond this to a more developed sentence. To accomplish these more developed sentences, ask:

"Why? Why do you have nice eyes?"
"My eyes sparkle when I laugh."
"Why are you good in baseball? "
"I hit the winning run to lock up the Summer League Baseball Championship."

Write both the short and more developed versions on the board or overhead for students to refer to as they write. Remind students they may not write any negative

comments about themselves such as: "My hair is a beautiful color, but I can't do anything with it." They must accentuate the positive.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Using their prewriting lists, students write complete sentences telling ten good things about themselves. The students may choose either to number and list their sentences or to write them in paragraph form.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: When students have completed their response to the story, they write a brief autobiography giving background on birthplace, family members, pets, hobbies, interests, and so forth. Students write fluently because they are working with a familiar topic, and the teacher can use the autobiography to learn more about the students.

CLOSURE: Divide the class into groups of four. Students read at least two of their sentences listing their good qualities and a portion of their autobiography to the rest of their group. Students wishing to read more may do so. Following the grouping, ask the students questions such as:

What did you learn about the others in your group?
What did you learn about yourself?
What did you learn about your writing?

Joan Mathieu, Patti Welder Intermediate School, Victoria, Texas

3 The Secondary Lessons

From contemplation one may become wise, but knowledge comes only from study.
A. Edward Newton

When students reach secondary school they are ready assimilate what Ann E. Berthoff calls the *what* and the *how*. She suggests in Reclaiming the Imagination that classrooms should be places "where students and teachers explore together ways to assure better understanding, ways to comprehend their comprehensions more comprehensively." What is known is coupled with how it is known in a metacognitive marriage. In this section, teachers share lessons that enable just that to happen.

A Novel Idea

GRADE LEVEL: Ninth and Tenth Grades

During two weeks of the nine-week reading course, students study a novel, Gentlehands by M. E. Kerr. During this study we introduce the elements of a novel, summarize the book, spend class time reading, and work in small groups on the writing of the reading project. The last two or three days the students in the group select a person to present their written project to the class.

FOCUS: The major focus for this unit is analyzing the novel through studying, discussing, reading and interacting within small groups.

MATERIALS: Gentlehands, notebook paper, pen, pencil.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Write the elements of the novel on the board. Ask students to discuss and explain each. Students then write these elements in their notebooks. Encourage them to apply the elements to other readings they have done. This application to past readings helps students think about other works they have read and prepares them for their new novel.

The teacher gives a brief summary of the novel adding that this novel includes feelings, relationships, and attitudes of young adults. Then the students discuss re-

lationships they observe in their own age groups.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: 1.Students read the novel in class, individually.
2. Students write a summary of the novel after they have completed the book - being sure to include information discussed.
3. Divide students into groups of four or five.
4. Groups discuss the novel and their summaries and then create an original book report.
5. Groups turn in the rough draft and the final copy of the book report.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: The groups may work out of class on a visual to be presented with their oral report. This works well in my classes. I find they spend extra time together after class preparing creative projects. These extra projects help them interact in different ways which in turn helps them understand the novel in different ways.

CLOSURE: After the oral reports, review the elements of the novel again and help them see how different groups developed their elements in creative ways. Also, review the relationships discovered among the characters of the novel and relate these to the relationships developed working in their groups.

Becky Gentry Webb, O.H. Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas

A Writing Lesson

GRADE LEVEL: C.L.A. I/II

Research tells us the attention span of a C.L.A. student is exactly eighteen minutes, so this lesson is designed accordingly. Each day the class spends about twenty minutes on the writing activity. This lesson focuses on encouraging the slower students, through the use of the writing process, to develop fluency and a greater willingness to write.

MATERIALS: A file folder for each student. A box to hold the folders for each class. Crayons or colored pencils (2 or 3 different colors for each student). Unlined white paper. An open-ended topic such as:
Summer
Your Job
Christmas Vacation
My Origins...

My favorite thing(s)...
If I could live anywhere, it would be...
What I feel about...
What I think about...
What I wish...

GUIDED PRACTICE: Day 1: Choose a topic and review brainstorming with students. I give each student a file folder and tell them to put their name and class period on the tab, then put the folder under the desk. Next, I give the open-ended topics to the class and ask themto brainstorm on their chosenl topics. THEY ARE NOT FINISHED UNTIL THEY HAVE COMPLETELY COVERED THE PAPER. I stress that too much is better than not enough. I monitor students' progress, encourage the slower ones, and motivate where necessary. When finished, students put their work in their folders, and file them in the appropriate box.

Day 2: Students retrieve their folders. Developing sentences from the brainstormed ideas provides the purpose of today's lesson. Using the brainstorming model from the previous day, we begin creating sentences for each of the ideas on the paper. When we have completed a half dozen, the students independently to do the same with their ideas

Day 3: The purpose of today's activity is to teach categorizing. Students take out their brainstorming and another sheet of paper. Using the model, the students help me find categories under which I could put several ideas. Having listed the categories, we work to put the rest of the ideas under the categories where they belong. Next, I pair students trying to put a better student with a slower student or an ESL student. In pairs they are able to help one another find categories.

Day 4: Determining sentence clarity is the basis of today's activity. I model by having students read my sentences (I finished mine at home the previous evening) and decide whether each was clear. Since a few were purposely unclear, they help me clarify those. Pairing the class with different students this time, I stressed the importance of positiveness in commenting about someone else's paper.

Day 5: The purpose of today's activity is to teach topic and concluding sentences. Again, using my model, we work on developing a first sentence which would let the reader know the subject of my paragraph. I show them how to use the topic to create a sentence. Then, we read all my sentences. They decide from the sentences how I might end my paragraph. Individually, they work on their own topic sentences and come up with a concluding sentence.

Day 6: Today's activity involves having the students take their categorized brainstorming and organize it into patterns. The students help me sequence my categories so they are logical and coherent. Then they work on their own. This allows them to move from their ideas to their sentences for tomorrow.

Day 7: The purpose is to find a main idea under each category and an idea which

might be used as an example. My model is the basis for this lesson, so the students work with me to organize it. Then students work together in pairs. This activity provides a perfect time for me to conference with each group.

Day 8: Students create a draft.

Day 9: Students correct their drafts using Joyce Armstrong Carroll's system of ratiocination (*Ratiocination and Revision or Clues in the Written Draft*, English Journal, November 1982, 90-92). Next, students select their own partners and exchange papers. Students read each other's papers to see if:

a) the meaning was clear;
b) there was a topic sentence developed from the title;
c) there were specific examples;
d) there was a concluding sentence.

CLOSURE: Students write the final draft. Encourage them to make all corrections before they begin.

This process is worthwhile because there is a definite element of success for each student. For many, it is the first time they have actually handed in a finished paper. As elemental as this lesson plan appears to be, it offers the creative teacher an infinite variety of possibilities to help the CLA student realize a measure of success in writing.

Beth H. Laauwe, Alief Elsik High School, Alief, Texas

Basic Students: A Model for Teaching Paragraph Writing

GRADE LEVEL: Tenth Grade

Although I neither drink beer nor advocate the messages in beer commercials, I am fond of "Elvira," the quippish Halloween "spokeswitch" for one beer company. Imagine, though, my shock when a former basic student returned to school in September masking an Elvira made-up face — ghost-white complexion, bloodthirsty lipstick, and thick black "goop" on the eyes. More shocking, yet not surprising, was her reply to a colleague who astoundingly stated that the girl looked wicked. Flattered, my student enthusiastically responded, "Thank you!"

Compliments aside, those who accept the challenge to teach basic students, search for methods to manipulate abstract definitions such as "topic sentence" into tangible realities. After all, a teacher's intrinsic reward occurs each time a student thinks the sometimes elusive, "I can!"

Thus, I developed a model for paragraph writing by using a familiar Mother Goose nursery rhyme which concentrates on writing supportive detail, andon

composing the topic sentence.

The purpose of this lesson is to have students evaluate content, organization, and topic development according to purpose and audience; use the composing process to plan and generate writing; proofread written work.

FOCUS: To "capture" students' attention, show a copy of Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes, and ask students to recall a few. Next, read the following rhyme:

Hey diddle diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laughed
To see such sport,
and the dish ran away with the spoon.

With objectives listed on the board or overhead, tell students that a simple, nonsensical nursery rhyme can be used to write supporting details for a paragraph and its topic sentence.

MATERIALS: Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes
Four index cards
"Transitional Expressions" hand-out

GUIDED PRACTICE: After dividing students into four groups, complete the following steps, monitoring and adjusting as necessary.

1. Write one question on each index card and distribute to each group.

Group one: Why did the cow jump over the moon?
Group two: How did the cow jump over the moon?
Group three: When did the cow jump over the moon?
Group four: Where did the cow land when it jumped over the moon?

2. Give each group an audience and purpose, and allow students to prewrite answers by listing or webbing. Imagination counts!

3. Read lists and eliminate any answers that do not respond to the question. (unity) Emphasize that supporting information determines the type and placement of the topic sentence, showing several examples.

4. Students compose appropriate topic sentences.

5. Students choose their method of organization: chronological order, spatial order, order of importance, and comparison/contrast.

6. Using the handout, "Transitional Expressions," students link sentences together.

7. Add a concluding sentence that "wraps up" or "clinches" the paragraph.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students compose their respective paragraphs and

proofread their work.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Pose the following scenario: A friend must write a paragraph about something of interest regarding his school. In three to five sentences, what advice would you give him about writing his paragraph?

CLOSURE: Ask the following question: "Which is easier to complete first — finding supporting information for a paragraph, or writing the paragraph's topic sentence?" Encourage students to elaborate their answers, asking for agreement/disagreement from other students.

Finally, have students "signal," using "thumbs up" or "thumbs down," their agreement/disagreement to the following statements:

By turning topic sentences into questions, we can write supporting details. With answers, we can organize our paragraphs and link sentences together with transitional expressions.

We can write paragraphs!

TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSIONS HANDOUT

Addition	moreover, further, furthermore, besides, also, and then, likewise, nor, too, again, in addition, equally important, next, first, secondly, thirdly, finally, last, lastly
Contrast	but, yet, and yet, however, still, nevertheless, on the other hand, on the contrary, after all, not withstanding, for all that, in contrast to this, at the same time, although this may be true
Comparison	similarly, likewise, in a like manner
Purpose	to this end, for this purpose, with this object
Result	hence, therefore, accordingly, consequently, thus, thereupon, wherefore
Time	meanwhile, at length, immediately, soon, after a few days, in the meantime, afterward
Place	here, beyond, nearby, opposite to, adjacent to, on the opposite side
Summary, Repetition, Exemplification, Intensification	To sum up, in brief, on the whole, in sum, in short, as I have said, in other words, to be sure, as has been noted, for example, for instance, in fact, indeed, in any event

Judy L. Henckel, Klein High School, Spring, Texas

Making "A Small Thing" of Mechanics

GRADE LEVEL: Tenth Grade

Using writing to respond to a prompt, Burke's Pentad to understand a poem, and mechanics to see how the author guides the reader, this lesson combines interpretative skills, creative abilities, and instruction in mechanics. This lesson enables students to:

1.use a variety of sentence structures: simple, compound, and complex;
2. use the forms and conventions of written language appropriately;
3.proofread written work for punctuation, spelling, grammatical and syntactical errors, paragraph indentation, margins, and legibility of writing;
4.choose appropriate words to convey intended meaning;
5. use oral language effectively in a variety of situations;
6. recognize the major differences among poems, short stories, novels, plays, and nonfiction;
7. recognize point of view in literary selections;
8. recognize the development of an overall theme in a literary work.
9. select main idea of a selection;
10.recognize relevant details;
11. make inferences and draw conclusions;
12. adjust reading rate according to purpose

MATERIALS: Copies of "A Small Thing" by Margaret Hasse for each student, or one transparency of the poem to use on an overhead projector.

Typed copies of Emily Dickinson's poem "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass" with punctuation omitted.

A bulletin board display or a chart on poster board of Burke's Pentad.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Step 1 - Students write in response to this prompt: "Small things make a difference. What small thing in your life has made a difference and how did it do so? "(10 minutes)

Step 2 - Read "A Small Thing" and apply Burke's Pentad asking (a) Who is the actor? Is the actor the same person as the narrator? (b) What is the scene? (c) What is the action? (d) How did the action occur? (means) (e) Why did the action occur? (purpose) What did the author want you to understand from this poem?

Step 3 - Examine with students how the author uses punctuation to guide the reader. (15 minutes)

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Divide students into groups and hand out Emily Dickinson's "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass" typed without punctuation. Students apply Burke's Pentad and supply punctuation to aid in creating the meaning. Put a

transparency of the poem on the overhead and supply an editor's punctuation. Discuss with students why the editor chose this punctuation and check their own versions against it. Discuss how their version of the punctuation works. When theirs works, point out why it does and why it is an alternative to the editor's choices. Remind students that Dickinson did not use much punctuation because she did not write for publication. (15 minutes)

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Write "Tom Smith called Sarah Lou is here" on the chalkboard. Ask students for different ways to punctuate for meaning.

CLOSURE: Ask for volunteers to read their pieces from the beginning of the period. Comment positively on the content. Ask where they used internal punctuation. Identify sentences which could be combined with semi-colons.

Doris Spraberry, Anson High School, Anson, Texas

A "Capital" Review

GRADE LEVEL: Tenth Grade Correlated Language Arts

Designed for use with basic level students, this lesson offers a different approach to reviewing capitalization rules. The activity, especially helpful in preparation for standardized tests, provides both a context similar to the test, instead of isolated textbook examples, and an easily adaptable format for other skills. The material appeals to student interests, and the procedure utilizes deductive thinking; integrates the eye, hand, and brain; and promotes learner success rather than frustration.

FOCUS: To help students review capitalization conventions, distribute copies of two brief articles and ask the class to read them. Then have students reread, focusing on the capital letters and thinking of reasons for each one.

MATERIALS: Chalkboard
Overhead projector
Colored transparency pens
Transparencies and handouts of copies of two or three brief articles (approximately 200 words) from high-interest magazines such as YM, Seventeen, or Rolling Stone. Retype one article without capital letters.

Articles may be biographies of teen movie actors/rock stars or reviews of popular movies or rock music albums. Chosen carefully, they will illustrate or generate examples of almost all conventions for review.

GUIDED PRACTICE: After the students have read from their handouts, project the transparency and underline the first capital letter. Ask, "Why is this letter capitalized?" and record the correct learner response on the chalkboard. Students should then record the rule in their notebooks. Next, have them underline each additional application of this convention. You may call on a volunteer to underline the repeat examples on the transparency. Continue in the same manner with the remaining capital letters.

Deal with the titles after completing the text of the article. Because magazines often "creatively capitalize" titles, analysis of them will most likely lead to a discussion not only of capitalizing titles but also of appropriate usage of audience, purpose, and format.

Solicit from the students any additional capitalization conventions and examples not appearing in the articles and have them record these from the chalkboard. The class will generate most of the review from these articles, frequently suggesting other rules and illustrations during the activity. For example, the response, "October is capitalized because it's a month," will spark another student to add, "And don't you write the days of the week with capitals, too?"

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Again, using the same type of article, retyped without capital letters, ask students to apply the conventions reviewed by inserting the necessary capitals. Later, learners may also verbally justify the capitals they have added.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Reviewing a piece of their own writing, students check for appropriate capitalization.

CLOSURE: During a debriefing session in which you can praise the class for their highly successful completion of the activity, ask such questions as:

Where you surprised by how many rules you could recall?

Did any of the examples help you remember a rule you have had trouble with before?

Was it easier to capitalize the third article after going through the others?

Are there any rules for which you would like additional examples?

Dianne R. Rodriguez, Victoria High School, Victoria, Texas

Teaching Comparison/Contrast Through Readers' Theater

GRADE LEVEL: Tenth through Twelfth Grades

This lesson grew out of a need to give my two low-achieving, kinetic eleventh grade classes a project which would get them involved physically in learning the concepts of comparison/contrast. The classes were composed of students who talked incessantly, interrupting me and the other almost at will, who were hard to keep on task, and who had short attention spans. Most showed some indications of learning disability such as extremely poor handwriting and spelling, letter reversal and syntactical errors. Yet, here they were, twenty-eight in each class. Here I was with a curriculum that called for teaching comparison/contrast, yet I wanted to end the six weeks with an activity which would give them positive feelings about this concept and reinforce what they had already done in group interaction in working through the writing process. They had developed some confidence in writing and enjoyed sharing through groups, so I decided to have them do a readers' theater using an excerpt from Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," and James Weldon Johnson's "The Creation." I made photocopies for each student on which they could make notes.

Objectives for this lesson will enable students to use oral language effectively in a variety of situations; make rhetorical choices based on audience, purpose, and form; distinguish between language used denotatively and connotatively in literary selections; identify irony, tone, mood, allusion, and symbolism in literary selections; recognize characteristics of literary selections; use literary terminology appropriately.

FOCUS: As a whole class, we brainstormed the Puritan ideas about God, which we had studied earlier. I told them we were going to do an oral project based on these ideas, Edwards sermon, and another work.

GUIDED PRACTICE: I read the sermon excerpt and asked them to jot down words or phrases which described their feelings on hearing this sermon and imagining that it was meant for them. We shared some of these feelings: "I felt scared," and "It makes me mad that God would hate me for nothing."

Next I read "The Creation" and again asked for responses. These responses were, of course, different. "In this one God is happy," or "He likes people."

I told the class they were doing what they would be doing for oral group projects: deciding on the similarities and differences of the two works and making an oral presentation demonstrating these to the class. We then reviewed the terms *comparison* and *contrast*. I explained that what they had shown me so far were contrasts. Now I wanted them to find by quickly looking over the works, at least one similarity. They readily saw that both are about God.

We discussed some possibilities for presentations, such as skits, choral reading, readers' theater, rewriting the scripts in modern language. Each person had to have a part in the final presentation. They were to be given daily grades on their work

in the group, with points deducted for being off-task, inattentive, unsupportive or failing to have scripts. Each group was to write an introduction, whatever script they needed, and a transition (bridging) explanation. I provided each group with a checklists of the tasks: reread the selections aloud in your groups; list similarities; list differences; decide on which ones to use; decide on method of presentation; assign tasks for writing and performing; write what you need for presentation; make notes on your own copies of works; rehearse.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The groups assembled (no more than five in a group) and began. I went from group to group, mainly listening, but pointing out some things they might consider, such as that both works used poetic language although one is a poem and one is sermon. I tried to help only if the group seemed bogged down. Mostly they needed encouragement.

CLOSURE: The last six to eight minutes of the period, I asked the group leaders to share with the class one idea they had learned, what they had accomplished, and the thing they had to do next.

The project took a week. I could have spent longer but was hesitant to go over the weekend for fear of losing momentum. In the next three days before presentation, I began each day with a brief reminder of tasks or a mini-lesson of what I had found they needed. in my moving from group to group. I also reviewed *metaphor*, *similes* and *personification*. We spent a few minutes on *tone*. They began to realize they were working with these devices and concepts in trying to show what the authors did. I also pointed out the differences in both idea and style from two different time periods.I kept my instruction to a minimum, as I wanted them to discover their focus.

The project was one of the most successful we have done. The students were excited about their work. They stayed on task; they found the main things they needed to find; and they made presentations that were creative and enjoyable for everyone. The most encouraging part to me was that they worked independently once they got going. They moved into two vacant areas and a hallway to rehearse and only wanted me to help them with props. I became an errand person assisting them, not the authority. The best presentation was an original skit in which a teenager talks to an Edwards-type God, telling Him what he has done during the day. God keeps bringing up all his failures. The teenager says, "But I try to make good grades."

God answers, "But you are a failure. You were born that way."

The teenager tells his friend all his problems and the friend, says, "I like you. I don't care if you're short," etc.

The last line is from the teenager, "Do you think if I try harder, someday God will like me, too?"

The success of this project measured by students' comments:
"I didn't understand this sermon before..."
"They are both sort of poetic, even the Edwards guy....."
"But I thought poetry was just about pretty stuff."
"Well, being held over a fire like a bug isn't pretty."
"Do you think he really believed that stuff?"
"I don't know. My grandmother does."
"You know, I like the idea of God being lonely like me, sometimes."
"How did he do that? I guess repeating it so often."
"Does the other one repeat anything?"

I videotaped their presentations and we watched them. Each person who was present to perform was to get a bonus grade. No one was absent. One group had worried about a chronic absentee and had rehearsed his part "just in case," but he was there.

Although this project was done with low achievers, it could easily be adapted to any level classes, by varying the selections, having students choose from a wider range and varied difficulty level.

Janet Lindemann, Westfield High School, Spring ISD

Understanding The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Through Analogies

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

Word analogies teach students to think analytically and independently about literature. Producing a viable analogy demands that students review all that they know, searching for relationships. Then a single piece of literature becomes part of a complete cultural fabric. In this lesson, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn fills in one more aspect of 19th Century American thought; it emerges as more than just another novel by Mark Twain. This lesson enables students to use the composing process to plan and generate writing; to demonstrate facility with word analogies and other forms of advanced vocabulary development; to perceive cause and effect relationships.

FOCUS: Write this word analogy on the board. Ask students to explain why it is true.

Huck : Pap :: Jim : Miss Watson

MATERIALS: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

ASSUMPTIONS: Students have read the novel. Students have learned to complete word analogies and to explain reasons for their choices (usually an activity for vocabulary study).

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Discuss the analogy used for the focus. Accept any supportable relationships, but encourage students to refer to specific points in the text to avoid subjective discussions about unsupportable points such as whether or not Miss Watson liked Jim or whether or not Huck deserved what he got. Lead them to see that in both cases, Pap and Miss Watson felt their tyranny justified, that in both cases the victims were slaves until they broke away to determine their own destinies.

2. Put another analogy on the board (or overhead projector).

Huck : river ::

Accept all answers, but require explanations. Write all completions on the board to show the diversity of relationships possible, gradually guiding students beyond the single work to other knowledge. Create several types of analogies, i.e., relationships, characteristics, other learning (history, literature).

Completions might progress in this way, but allow students to determine the completions.

Huck : river :: slave : freedom OR

Jim : Emancipation Proclamation OR

Dorothy : yellow brick road OR

Montagues & Capulets : marriage of Romeo and Juliet

On the river, Huck escapes his own slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation would make Jim free. Dorothy's path to escaping Oz is the yellow brick road. The marriage of Romeo and Juliet eventually causes freedom from hate. In each case, the first part of the analogy is the agent and the second part is the means to freedom.

3. Put a third analogy on the board, this one calling for connection with prior reading. i.e., Twain : honesty :: Hawthorne :

A. adultery B. preachers C. confession D. punishment E. children

Allow students to select the best completion. Ask for explanations of selections. Accept any logical answer.

Look for the concept that Twain felt honesty was essential while Hawthorne felt confession ("Be true! Be true!"—a form of honesty) was essential. Both 19th Century writers decry the dishonesty they see in American life.

(If students haven't read The Scarlet Letter, use another analogy incorporating prior reading.)

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: 1. Divide students into groups of 2-3.

2. Ask each group to produce several original analogies, using characters, events, or objects in Huck Finn. Suggest a few, the feud, the raft, Col. Sherburn.

3. Circulate. When a group completes a good analogy, ask one of the group

members to write it on the board. Continue until each group has at least one analogy on the board.

4. Ask each group to explain the analogies it produced and wrote on the board.

CLOSURE: Review the relationships discovered and what these relationships teach about Huck Finn.

EXTENSION: Students choose one analogy, an original analogy or one produced during the class period, to write up in essay form, about a page long, this paper should include four parts: the analogy, explanation of each of the two lines of the analogy, and discussion of the relationship between the two parts of the analogy. Students then present their analogies orally to the class. The class takes notes.

Finally, each student chooses one analogy as the basis for an analytical paper. The analogy production has served as an extended prewriting activity. The concept of the selected word analogy provides and original approach to Huck Finn. Now the concept needs to be documented with primary research to provide specific support (happenings, quotations, and so forth) to prove the concept and to elaborate on it.

Elizabeth McGonigal, Round Rock, Texas

Vision-Present of Vision-Past

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

Everyone loves to tell about a time in life when the worst possible day becomes calm by clutching a magic blanket or teddy bear. Re-seeing secure moments in the past through adult eyes provides a natural response to this writing prompt.

Ask students to bring an item of security or to remember a time in their lives when they felt secure (an adult version of "show and tell"). What object, person, or activity made them feel this "okay-ness" or inner peace? Possible items brought to class or memories recalled may include teddy bears, dolls, blankets, books, mommy's lap, daddy's hands, music boxes, and so forth.

Reading aloud Ira Sleeps Over, a children's story based on the premise of teddy bears as security items, provides a dramatic catalyst for writing about individual moments when all was right with the world.

FOCUS: Objectives for students include hearing children's literature read aloud, applying memory as a writing prompt, kinesthetic learning for those who bring items from home to share with others. The teacher invites "sharing talk" which

sparks interest and enthusiasm.

MATERIALS: Ira Sleeps Over by Barnard Waber, butcher paper, felt tip markers, paper and pen/pencil, and security object (optional).

GUIDED PRACTICE: Brainstorm with the students about their times of serenity. Allow unlimited time and encourage the writers time to share "the story" which accompanies the item or moment of security. Not all students will want to share; however, this will not be a problem because clarification of the acceptable responses occurs through reassurance given after each story is told.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: The writing process could begin with an invitation to students to free write, cluster, or list details and description of the memory and the item. Samantha Mahan, Abilene, Cooper High School junior student shared her prewriting as an example of what she did in class:

my tiny little tiger
new - soft, furry - always there for me
old from time — matted and old
he'd sometimes be wet from tears
he comforted me, cuddly, soft
I accidentally dropped him — he got dirty
lonely when apart
as I grew older, things changed
my inner feelings never changed

EXTENDED PRACTICE: The following day students use their prewritings to generate a poem which presents the readers with the emotion surrounding the memory. They begin by circling favorite words and/or phrases, and then proceed to a listing of these on separate lines. They may add, rearrange the order, or eliminate words and phrases in order to present a more complete picture.

After students have written their poems, they share their writings with peer groups. Using the feedback (suggestions and responses), students may revise their poems and put in final product form. Samantha's final copy:

My Tiny Little Tiger

My tiny, little tiger
didn't used to seem so small,
and even then he wasn't
just a matted, furry ball.

My tiny, little tiger

was always there for me,
he never told me to be quiet
or not to cry if I happened to skin my knee.

My tiny, little tiger
isn't as pretty as he used to be,
but he was always there for comfort
when Mommy yelled at me.

My tiny, little tiger
used to be so beautiful and clean,
yet he never ever complained
if I dropped him near the ravine.

My tiny, little tiger
never felt lonely,
since we were never far apart.
But when I got too big
for my tiny little tiger
nothing seemed the same.

But just between my tiger and me
he could never get too big for me
so when I need a shoulder to cry one,
or just someone to care,
not someone to listen to,
but just to simply be there,
I go get my tiny little tiger
and for a moment I can go back
to a yesterday, or anywhere,
and let my tiny little tiger
free my love to fill the air.

Samantha Mahan

CLOSURE: During the following few days, provide brief times during the class periods for students to write "graffiti" style their poems on a large piece of butcher paper entitled MEMORY LANE (or title of your choosing) using varied colors of large sized magic markers. This in-class publishing (posting on the wall) can provide an effective visual for our students and visitors, perhaps open house.

Kaye Price-Hawkins, O. H. Cooper High School, Abilene, Texas

I See Your True Colors, Jay Gatsby!

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

Values, dreams, and relationships are the elements of F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby which appeal to most students. One of the ways a teacher can most assuredly heighten interest in reading and discussing this novel is through student-centered questions and activities. The following details an assignment which begins the day affter a reading of "Chapters 1-3 "of The Great Gatsby and continues throughout the reading of the entire novel. Not only will this activity prevent the boredom and negative attitudes associated with study questions, but it will also guarantee lively, student-initiated discussions of the characters and themes of The Great Gatsby.

This lesson will enable students to:

a. use oral language effectively in a variety of situations

b. adapt the choice of language and method of presentation to purpose and audience

c. use good speech techniques

d. evaluate the author's point of view

e. read to explore, clarify, and affirm his own values and thoseof others

f. recognize the major authors, periods, forms, and works in American literature

g. recognize that style depends on a writer's purpose, the literary period, and the intended audience

h. recognize that an author's life has a bearing on the themes of his writing

i. identify irony, tone, mood, allusion, and symbolism in literary selections

j. relate the meaning of a symbol to the literary work as a whole

MATERIALS: Individual copies of The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald, index cards, markers, and tape

FOCUS: Write the following six colors on the overhead projector or chalkboard: rose/pink, gold, yellow, blue, green, white. Review the definition of *symbolism* and ask students to brainstorm possible ideas or concepts symbolized by these colors. A possible list would associate rose/pink with illusion or a dream world, gold with the color of money or wealth, yellow with greed, blue with perfection, green with hope or desire, and white with purity and innocence. Ask students if they remember seeing these colors in their assigned reading of chapters 1-3 of The Great Gatsby.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Using an overhead projector or chalkboard, draw a six-

section grid and label each section with one of the six colors previously discussed. Students copy their examples on their own paper. Using "Chapter 1"of The Great Gatsby as an example, students find examples of the use of the six colors. As students call out their findings, write down each example on the overhead projector or chalkboard under the appropriate color on the color grid. Students also copy each other's mexamples on their color grids, modeling the teacher's form for each entry: Nick's gold volume of books on banking - p. 4.

Each entry should include the character, color, and object or event being described, along with the page number of the color reference. After all the color examples have been found, ask the students to note the index cards taped to their desks identifying the color each student will be responsible for in his/her group. Ask students who are assigned the color "white" to raise their hands, and elicit an oral discussion of their conclusions about the author's purpose and/or message associated with his use of their particular color in "Chapter 1." Generate a one or two sentence summary of their conclusions and write it under the color examples on the color grid for the students to copy on their own papers. Continue this procedure for all the other colors.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students draw another color grid on a separate sheet of paper titled "Chapters 2-3." Direct each student to go through those chapters, and this time, each student locates examples of his/her own particular color. Each student's assignment is to enter each example of his/her particular color on the color grid according to the teacher's model, and write a one or two sentence summary of his/her conclusions about the author's purpose and/or message associated with the use of that color in "Chapters 2-3."

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Through an oral presentation, each student shares his/her findings from "Chapters 2-3 "with his/her group on the next class day. Each group member takes notes on his/her own color grid from the other presentations for future reference and class discussion. This individual group discussion precedes a class discussion which further clarifies and probes the complex relationships between the characters and themes of The Great Gatsby, heightened by F. Scott Fitzgerald's use of color imagery. This procedure is used for discussion of all subsequent chapters in the novel.

CLOSURE: Ask the following questions of the class:

1. What are the two main parts of your assignment for each discussion day of The Great Gatsby?
2. What will this assignment help you to examine or analyze?

These questions will not only clarify any questions about what each student's

responsibilities are for his/her group and the class, but they will also remind the students of the purpose for the assignment.

Teri A. Coburn, Langham Creek High School, Houston, Texas

Teaching Writing, Literature, and Reading Skills
Using the Declaration of Independence

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

By analyzing the Declaration of Independence, we can identify specific writing skills used in this model of eloquent writing.

FOCUS: Ask students to respond in writing to the following: "You need to inform a college committee that you are a viable candidate for their university. You seek a written recommendation. Whom would you select to write this communication? What skills should the person possess?" After getting feedback from students, we are able to distinguish between a recommendation saying, "Paul's a good kid. He otta get in Harvard" and one stating, "Paul demonstrated critical thinking skills in my class when he...." By the same token, Jefferson was selected to do the actual writing of the Declaration of Independence because he possessed writing skills.

MATERIALS: A copy of the Declaration of Independence

PROCEDURES: Explanation: The actual drafting of the Declaration of Independence was initiated by Richard Henry Lee's motion in the Continental Congress of June 7, 1776. On June 11, Congress voted to name a committee of five: Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Sherman, and Livingston. They gathered in a hot, humid, fly-infested room over a stable, where Jefferson wrote the first draft, spending 18 days on one paragraph! We have discussed how Thomas Paine's writings, "Common Sense" and the "Right of Man," influenced the writing of the Declaration. Jefferson's challenge was not to invent new ideas but, in his own words, "to place before mankind the common sense of the subject...."

Procedure: Read aloud the Declaration of Independence. (I ask each student to take one paragraph, involving the entire class.) Then go back and discuss items under guided practice.

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Purpose (informative—to declare the causes leading to independence)

2. Mode (classificatory—categories of reasons)

3. Audience (the colonists, King George III and his subjects, other nations)
4. Main premises and conclusions
   a. Major premise: All men are created equal
   b. Minor premise: The King has stripped American colonies of unalienable rights.
   c. Conclusion: "...these united Colonies are...Free Independent States...."
5. Structure and style
   a. Kind of argument used (deductive reasoning, general statement to particulars and causes enumerated, the effect being declaration)
   b. Paragraphing (each paragraph has separate weight and importance; reinforce that a paragraph has no set number of sentences; listing all causes in 27 paragraphs also brings attention to how many causes existed, any one of which serious enough to cause a revolution; enumeration also shows patience of the colonists up to that point)
   c. Use of the triad (strong structure: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," three concepts in logical order)
   d. Parallelism (parallel structure used after each *He* and after each *For*)
   e. Periodic sentence (long, carefully balanced sentence with point at end, popular in 1700's)
   f. Repetition (charges are hammered through syntactical repetition of the same word—*he* and *for*—producing staccato effect—anaphora)
   g. Choice of words
      1. Felicitous expressions ("in the course of human events" instead of "in life")
      2. Vocabulary (words that could paper on SAT, denotative words so that no misunderstanding would occur)
   h. Mood (solemn language contributing to serious mood; signers also pledged to each other their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor)
   i. Tone (condemnatory—the King has done wrong)
   j. Fact or opinion (enumerated causes are facts)

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students paraphrase the Declaration, a skill needed for writing a research paper.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Use techniques in own writing.

CLOSURE: Share paraphrasing.

Eleanore Manley, Klein High School, Klein, Texas

The Universality of Literature:
A Correlation of Today's Teenage Society with Puritan Mores

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

Because students have difficulty relating the literature of earlier centuries to today's world, I want them to understand the universality of literature by correlating a work of Nathaniel Hawthorne to their own teenage world. This lesson incorporates transfer from a previous unit and includes a vocabulary study and a study of symbolism. The desired outcome for this lesson will be a literary paper which will include a statement of purpose, well-developed paragraphs, and a concluding statement.

The student will:

refine sentences and paragraphs into compositions exhibiting unity, clarity, and coherence;

write at least one form of literary discourse;

use the forms and conventions of written language appropriately;

distinguish between language used denotatively and connotatively in literary selections;

recognize the major types of figurative language and sound devices;

identify *irony, tone, mood, allusion,* and *symbolism* in literary selections;

use literary terminology appropriately.

FOCUS: The words *isolation* and *alienation* are on the boardwhen students enter the room. Students spend a few minutes writing the feelings these words generate. . A short discussion follows.

MATERIALS: Copies of "The Minister's Black Veil" by Nathaniel Hawthorne; overhead projector and transparencies.

PROCEDURES:

1. Review vocabulary words: *parable, symbolism, isolation, alienation, visage, vagary, facade, masquerade, ambiguity.*

2. Review symbolism found in "The Minister's Black Veil."

3 The class discusses various ways in which today's teenagers feel the isolation and alienation from their peers and from adults (parents, teachers, etc.).

4. The teacher identifies examples of isolation from the pioneer generation (physical and mental). The previously read selection "Giants in the Earth" will be correlated with the discussion. Other examples of isolation will be discussed, such as those faced by Vietnam veterans. The goal is to demonstrate that each generation

has its own isolation.

5. The class discusses the isolation and alienation found in "The Minister's Black Veil."

6. Introduce the phrase, "...in that saddest of all prisons, the human heart..." taken from "The Minister's Black Veil." Each student choosees one "prison" from his or her world and writes a literary paper explaining the circumstances surrounding that prison and what might be done to help correct the situation.

7. Teach the aspects of a literary paper. Use examples from journals, the New York Times Book Review, and so forth.

GUIDED PRACTICE: The teacher leads the students through a sample literary paper.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Each student works on his/her own prewriting for paper. Teacher monitors individual progress. After students completetheir prewriting, they will write their statements of purpose.

CLOSURE: Students respond to questions relating to the universality of literature and to ways in which the prison of the minister relates to a teenager's "prisons" today.

EXTENSION: These questions can be adapted for group discussions and oral presentations or for individual work.

1. Explain the ambiguity of the theme of secret sin as found in "The Minister's Black Veil."

2. Hawthorne had a religious background of Puritanism. How are his feelings toward his religious heritage reflected in "The Minister's Black Veil"?

3. Give a brief explanation of Reverend Hooper's dying words, "I look around me, and lo! on every visage a Black Veil."

4. Place the minister in a church congregation in today's society. Explain the reaction of the people to his vagary.

5. Explain the phrase, "For the Earth, too, had on her Black Veil."

6. Identify some situations in today's world when a person might feel safer hiding behind a facade.

Pat Watson, Muleshoe High School, Muleshoe, Texas

Student Biographers

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

As the only two junior English teachers at Brenham High School, we came up with the idea for the author biography unit in one of our planning sessions. Faced with two tasks—enabling students to develop research skills before attempting a lengthy documented paper and presenting author biographies in an interesting way—we brainstormed on each separately and arrived at a solution to both. Why not combine the two by having students become author experts? Why not have each student conduct research on a different American author, write a research report, and give an oral presentation when the author came under discussion during the year? The results of the project were so positive that we felt other teachers might want to try a similar unit.

The purpose of this lesson is to have students write longer compositions incorporating outside information with documentation; use oral language effectively in a variety of situations; recognize the major authors in American literature; use specialized references independently.

FOCUS: We read a poem by Lawrence Ferlinghetti (a work by any contemporary author would suffice) to the students and then asked if they would like to know something about the man who wrote the poem. Fortunately we both received affirmative replies and commenced to read a brief biographical sketch of the poet before reading additional poems. This sketch served as a model for the students as we included unusual facts to make it more interesting. We then gave the assignment: "You will each draw a card, conduct research on the author whose name appears on the card, write a biographical sketch of the person, and present an oral report when be begin a study of a work by that individual. Please turn in two copies of the written report; one will be returned to you and one will be kept on file for you to use in preparing your oral presentation. If you transfer to the other English teacher's class, the file copy will be given to her. At the end of the year, the file copy will be returned to you. You will receive one major grade for your written report this six weeks and another grade for the oral presentation. Because you will be giving your reports at different times during the year, some of you will have one extra grade during a given six weeks, but it will all balance out in the end." Following the discussion generated by their questions, we allowed students to draw the cards containing author names.

MATERIALS: List of American authors whose works form the core literature curriculum. Index cards containing names of individual writers (for students to randomly choose). Literature textbook. School library. Duplicated work by contemporary writer selected by teacher (for modeling purposes). MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Selected handouts (documentation, citations, quotations, etc.)

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Although we began this project early in the fall semester, students had previously composed "Biopoems" (eleven line biographical poems described in Roots in the Sawdust, ed. Anne Ruggles Gere. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1985. 222). Prior to having students read their pieces to the class, we led students through the "Reporter's Formula" activity. Class members took turns introducing the student author before each read his or her biopoem aloud. Then we discussed how knowledge about the author enhanced appreciation of a work.

2. Students worked in small groups to compile lists of facts they would like to know about authors. Each student had been given a list of all authors and student researchers, so they could share any information they already had about a specific writer as they conducted group discussions.

3. Teachers conducted mini-lessons on library resources and other avenues of exploration available. Students were encouraged to consult magazines, newspapers, and TV guides.

4. From this point on guided practice and independent practice became recursive. Mini-lessons were given on notetaking, while spontaneous student-teacher conferences occurred in the library and in the classroom. At the appropriate time, teachers presented mini-lessons on paraphrasing, quoting, citing, documenting, etc.

5. Students were given class time to draft essays about their authors based on what they had learned and then instructed on how to incorporate documented evidence into their essays. Teachers shared an essay on Lawrence Ferlinghetti with the students as a model.

6. We conducted student-teacher conferences to assist students in selecting pertinent information and to discuss methods and time of presentations before they gave their oral reports.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Begun during the guided practice phase, independent practice consisted of conducting research, organizing and assimilating research materials, making decisions as to what to include and what to omit, writing the final essay, and preparing and presenting the oral report.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: The nature of the original assignment led students to continue their study of individual authors for several reasons. The oral reports were not given in conjunction with the written essay but prior to class study of works by the particular author; therefore, some students continued their research up until the time of presentation. Others became so enamored with their authors that they continued to pursue lines of research. The media served to encourage others to extend their study; for example, the PBS ministries on American poets provided additional material for several students. One student called one of us to suggest that we watch the special on Ernest Hemingway. A number of young people chose a

work by the author they had researched as the primary source for their literary research paper written in the spring semester. Perhaps most significantly, students continued to tell each other if they came across information about their authors.

CLOSURE: Theoretically, closure occurred when the student gave an oral report to the class on an individual author; however, because of extended interest and upon the advice of the teachers, many students have kept and will continue to keep their author logs for future use.

Anne W. Tobias, Brenham High School, Brenham, Texas
Barbara Wahrmund, Brenham High School, Brenham, Texas

Introduction to a Thematic Unit on Nature

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

The students have studied the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods in American Literature using the historical/chronological approach. They have completed a study of Romanticism, Transcendentalism, and Realism. This unit will enable students to: 1. write using their own processes;

2. use the convention of writing to express personal feelings;

3. use oral language effectively in sharing ideas about nature;

4. recognize Robert Frost as an important American poet in whose nature is important;

5. identify and describe the speaker in "Stopping by Woods";

6. identify symbolism and describe how the woods in "Stopping by Woods" might by symbolic;

7. identify quatrains, rhyme scheme, repetition, and the relationship of sound to sense in poetry.

FOCUS: "Our study of literary realism has been completed. Now we'll focus on a single theme, nature, to note how a poet treats the subject. In doing so, we'll explore our own feelings toward nature. "

MATERIALS: Paper and pen; chalk and chalkboard; background material on Robert Frost; two of Frost's poems, "Design" & "The Road Not Taken" on record or for the teacher's reading.

PROCEDURES (Includes guided practice): 1. Focused journal writing by students and teacher for 10 minutes describing a time when you were frightened by nature, when you were awed by nature, or when you felt that nature was indifferent;

2. Teacher will read his/her writing; students will be asked to share theirs;
3. Lead into Frost's background and his use of nature;
4. Read or play a record of one of Frost's poems: "Design" and/or "The Road Not Taken" and note how Frost uses nature in each;
5. Read "Stopping by Woods" (Guided practice)
   a. What is happening in the poem?
   b. Identify the speaker.
   c. Why are the last two lines repeated?
   d. Define the term *symbol*. How might the woods by symbolic?
   e. Point out the use of quatrains and the rhyme scheme in the poem. How do these elements contribute to the effectiveness of the poem?
   f. Have you ever felt like the persona in this poem?

CLOSURE: Recap on how Frost used nature in "Stopping by Woods."

Doris A. Clatanoff, Texas A&I University, Kingsville, Texas

Fun With Epigrams

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh Grade

The study of American literature often needs a "face lift." A fun activity, designed to rejuvenate and recapture student interest, especially after studying a longer piece of literature, deals with Benjamin Franklin's epigrams, published originally in Poor Richard's Almanack.

Students view this lesson as "fun," enhancing their positive attitude towards American literature while improving their abilities in these areas: memorization, higher level thinking, creative writing, oral presentation, and reading skills. Learning takes place, and students enjoy this "fun" lesson.

FOCUS: Upon entering class, students view an attention-getting transparency beginning with the definition of an epigram (a brief and witty statement expressing a wise or clever observation or a general truth about life). The lesson's objectives follow: "Today, Stingarees (school mascot) will read and interpret Benjamin Franklin's epigrams and will create their own epigram representative of their present society." Next, an example of interpreting an epigram with a drawing of a Stingaree reading and writing its interpretation. The transparency text concludes with the following purpose: "...so that I raise my level of thinking, write creatively, improve my memorization skill, reading and oral presentation skills."

MATERIALS: Handout of epigrams from Poor Richard's Almanack
Overhead projector, transparencies, and colored pens
Chalkboard and chalk
Colorful focus and closure transparencies

GUIDED PRACTICE: Prior to class, the teacher writes several of Ben Franklin's epigrams on the board and displays on the overhead projector the focus transparency. Modeling the interpretation of two of Ben Franklin's epigrams, the teacher writes these epigrams and their interpretations. Epigrams used in this modeling include: "He that cannot obey cannot command." "Well done is better than well said." "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched." After writing the interpretation, the teacher asks students, "Did you have a different meaning for these epigrams?"

Next, the teacher says, "Write what the epigrams on the board mean to you." After wait time, the teacher calls on students to share. their interpretations.

After discussing the differences between Ben Franklin's society and today's society, the teacher asks, "What items/values do we have in our society today that were not present in Ben Franklin's day?" The teacher again models by creating modern epigrams. Students explain their meaning. An example , "A stop at the gas station saves a walk," involves the class in this guided practice.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Have students choose two of Franklin's epigrams and write their interpretations. Next, students should create their own epigram and write what it means to them. The teacher instructs, "You will memorize your epigramt and present it orally in class tomorrow." (The teacher quickly reviews the following oral presentation skills: audience, interest-catching opening and closing, eye contact, facial expressions, body language, and voice qualities.)

EXTENDED PRACTICE: An addition to the oral presentation could be a graphic representation of the epigram created.

CLOSURE: The teacher projects the following overhead transparency: a colorful drawing of a Stingaree behind a speaker's stand saying, "Proud Stingarees, today you increased your thinking and creativity by interpreting two of Franklin's epigrams and by writing and interpreting your own epigram!"

Nancy Howard, Victoria High School, Victoria, Texas

Three Poets and a Painting

GRADE LEVEL: Eleventh or Twelfth Grades

After several years of teaching seniors W. H. Auden's "Musee des Beaux Arts," I discovered William Carlos Williams' poem "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus." This led to a comparison assignment for my students. The senior text I was using (England in Literature, eds. Helen McDonnel, et. al., Scott, Foresman and Company, 1979) contains a copy of Brueghel's painting The Fall of Icarus to illustrate Auden's work, making it easy for students to examine the picture as they prepared their comparisons. Later, coming across a copy of Michael Hamburger's poem on the same subject, I filed it away for future use. The future came this year as I was teaching junior English.

The objectives I accomplished were enabling students to evaluate the author's point of view; to recognize the major types of figurative language; to identify *irony, tone, mood, allusion,* and *symbolism*; recognize characteristics of literary selections; to use literary terminology appropriately; to evaluate one's own writing as well as that of others.

FOCUS: I begin by asking the class to recall the story of Daedulus and Icarus. After a brief discussion I gave everyone a handout with Williams' poem printed on the bottom fourth of the page. I ask students to form a mental picture of what they imagined as I read the poem aloud. Then I say, "The poem has been printed at the bottom of the page so that you will have room to draw a picture of the scene described. Please illustrate Williams' poem to the best of your ability." I reassure students that I do not expect professional art work and that stick figures were acceptable.

MATERIALS: Handout containing Williams' poem "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus." Picture of Brueghel's painting (consult librarian or art teacher for copies). Copies of Auden's "Musee des Beaux Arts" and Hamburger's "Lines on Brueghel's Icarus."

GUIDED PRACTICE: As students complete their drawings and share them, I circulate copies of Brueghel's painting. (A better way would be to show a colored slide or transparency.) Excited murmurs increase in volume as many discover similarities between their work and that of the Renaissance master.

Following discussion of the painting, their drawings, and Williams' poem, I ask them to read Auden's work. I explain the allusions but intentionally said nothing else about either piece. I then hand out copies of Hamburger's poem.

Working in triads, students discuss the three poems in terms of form, content, tone, point of view, symbolism, imagery, and so forth. Each group formulates a brief summary statement to share with the class. My role is that of observer, mediator, and guide.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students write essays in which they compare, analyze, and evaluate the three poems. I also instruct them to state which poem they preferred and to defend their choice.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: I give the following assignment: Find a painting that you like and bring it to class. On the designated day I lead the students through an exercise in Carroll's hexagonal writing or Cowan's cubing with their paintings as the focus. They continue through the stages of the writing process to compose pieces about the art work. Students chose their own form and mode. Some write poems; several compose essays; and others created dialogs.

Further extension occurrs as students become interested in reading other poems about art, viewing the work described, and evaluating the author's interpretation.

CLOSURE: A Read-Around

Anne W. Tobias, Brenham High School, Brenham, Texas

The Unseen Scene

GRADE LEVEL: Twelfth Grade

Can you picture this scenario?

> ...Her feet do not seem to touch the floor as she moves slowly across the room. "Lady Macbeth, Queen of Scotland," she laughs. Picking up a gold necklace, she begins to cry. "I have everything, but I cannot undo what has been done. I am Queen of Scotland," she screams, "queen of hatred, queen of fear, and queen of nothing." Lady Macbeth falls to the floor. Suddenly, her hands begin to drip with blood, but there is no cut. "Out, out I say. Have I not bled enough?" Her tearfilled eyes see a dagger in the hall. She slowly crawls to it like a baby in all its innocence and lifts it above her head as if to crown herself. "Now, I die and join my husband's soul. It too was murdered by ambition..."

Anyone familiar with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* may realize this scene does not happen onstage in the actual text. This excerpt comes from a student's effort to produce such an offstage scene for an audience. Thus, the Unseen Scene (a la Roman Polanski) becomes an excellent writing alternative for students rather than expository drivel.

FOCUS: The major focus for this activity is the prewriting technique called writing roulette (R. Baird Shuman 3-4)

MATERIALS: 1. Macbeth by William Shakespeare
2. Video—stage version performed by Lincoln Center in Washington D. C.
3. Background material of Elizabethan Age, its history, culture, and theatre for discussion.

GUIDED PRACTICE: After discussion the Elizabethan era, the students and I read the play as we watch a stage version of video. Using two other prewriting activities, we explore and discover most of the important aspects of the play. Through freewriting, students gained understanding of theme, characterization, and Shakespeare's language and culture. We also use Kenneth Burke's Pentad to examine motives, attitudes, and conflict. Once students have a firm grasp of the play, we proceed to producing the unseen scene.

First we brainstormed all offstage scenes in the play. Each student chooses a scene to develop. We established a hypothetical situation in which we have been hired as screen writers for a new film version of Macbeth. The challenge of this production was that the director wanted several offstage scenes included in the movie. Students would, therefore, need to include numerous visual details to translate to the screen. We also discuss elements that make for a good scene.

Next, we begin the writing roulette. Each student begins writing his or her scene. After writing for about 5 minutes, each student stops and passes his or her scene to the person sitting behind him/her. Students then shift from their scenes to the writing of the scene before them, one written by someone else. We continue this passing five times as we discusse between passes how the scenes should be progressing. We also talk about the needto maintain the style already established in each scene by the original writer. The last person brings the scene to a close and returns the scene to its original writer.

Now each student has a scene to develop with collective ideas that he/she could use or discard for the final draft.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students then use all their prewritingto write scenes which include the character(s), action, and dialog for the movie screen. This project enables students to incorporate thematic motifs, visual details, figurative language, dialog within their writing. The final products also demonstrat students' synthesis level understanding of theme, character, conflict, tone and mood, language/style, etc., of Shakespeare's times and his tragedy of Macbeth.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: For additional credit, many students write their scenes in actual play form, using script techniques with dialog and stage directions. Others

write parodies of the scenes, poking fun not only at Shakespeare's style but other movie types as well.

CLOSURE: To conclude this activity and Shakespeare's Macbeth, each student reads or presents orally his or her scene for the class.

REFERENCE: Shuman, R. Baird. How to Handle the Paper Load: Classroom Practices in Teaching English 1979-1980. Ed. by Gene Stafford. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1979.

Theresa Holloway, Westwood High Schol, Round Rock, Texas

Beowulf Revisited, or How to Rejuvenate on Old Classic

GRADE LEVEL: Twelfth Grade

Bored with Beowulf? The story of the stalwart Anglo-Saxon hero Beowulf and his struggles with Grendel is one of those old "chestnuts" found in twelfth-grade English programs all over the United States. In many cases, students find this epic boring and see no application to their own lives. If the English curriculum retains Beowulf, what activities can the teacher devise to make the poem appealing to the sophisticated tastes of modern youth? One possibility uses an introductory role-playing process followed by an individual writing assignment requiring the composition of a business letter. Not only does this activity involve all students in both oral and written experiences, but it also employs every level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

FOCUS: Students write their own definitions of *heroism*. Each student lists examples of actual persons, living or dead, who exemplify this quality. Students then tabulate the responses on these lists and report the results to the class, all of whom enjoy hearing who their classmates' heroes and heroines are.

MATERIALS: Text of Beowulf and duplicated instructions for procedures students are to follow in the role-playing process

GUIDED PRACTICE: Students engage in a role-playing experience similar to the plight which befalls King Hrothgar when Grendel terrorizes his kingdom. Students summarize this problem in narrative form. In this simulation, a monster preys upon a modern-day town and prevents citizens from meeting in their new community hall. In response to this predicament, Frankie Fearless, the modern hero/heroine,

asks town officials for permission to destroy this monster. Prior to hearing an oral presentation by Fearless of the plan for eliminating the monster, town citizens meet in committees to consider Fearless' offer. Students draw for specific roles and then play the parts of the people in group meetings. There they discuss the advisability of accepting Fearless' proposal and brainstorm questions to ask at an open town meeting. Students receive lists of these committees, which include law enforcement officers, elected officials from town and country, educators, and a citizens' advisory group.

After committee tasks are completed, the entire class convenes in a general town meeting chaired by the county judge. At this point, the activity involves Bloom's comprehension, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels. Fearless gives an oral explanation fo the proposal and answers the questions of various town committees. After sometimes heated debates about Fearless' offer, the students, in their roles as townspeople, vote on whether or not to accept Frankie's help. Some classes accept Fearless' ideas for eliminating the monster; others reject the offer outright. the outcome is immaterial. What is important is that students compare or contrast their own proposals, analyze the situation, suggest solutions, and evaluate these decisions.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Each student completes a writing assignment tailored to his or her specific role in the simulation experience. For this activity, I use the business letter, a composition form which, although sometimes neglected by teachers because it seems so mundane, is one of the most useful forms that a student can learn. To compose the letter, the student considers not only the form but also how the purpose for writing and the audience will help in determining content and tone. For example, because of the damage inflicted by the monster on its mother, the student playing the role of the county judge writes a letter requesting that the governor declare the county a disaster area and grant disaster relief. The student uses correct business letter format, find out how to address the governor, justify requests with specific evidence, and uses a tone appropriate to such a letter. During the composition of the letters, students complete the three stages of the writing process: prewriting, writing, and revising. Small group work may be used whenever the teacher thinks it will help.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: After completion of proofreading and editing, students willing to do so share their letters by reading them aloud to the class. This activity usually generates considerable mirth and enjoyment because students share their creativity with others. It also becomes a synthesizing, evaluative time that effectively applies Bloom's levels and prepares students to begin the actual reading of Beowulf.

CLOSURE: After completion of the role-playing activity and the composition, as my students read Beowulf, they note the wide differences between the cultures of the Anglo-Saxons and modern Americans. However, they also discover marked likenesses between the two cultures. By this time Beowulf has emerged not as a boring, tedious poem to be "gotten through" but as an intriguing story with real application to their own world.

Louellen Pledger, Brenham High School, Brenham, Texas

Mobile Paragraphing

GRADE LEVEL: Ninth through Twelfth Grades

Teaching language usage doesn't have to be static seatwork. Detailed below is a method of teaching paragraphing that allows variety and movement while it demonstrates paragraph structure, organization, and the history of the paragraph. This lesson enables students to:

1. refine a paragraph exhibiting unity, clarity, and coherence;
2. make rhetorical choices based on audience, purpose, and form;
3. make language choices;
4. use the forms and conventions of written language appropriately;
5. evaluate one's own writing as well as that of others;
6. describe a major feature of the origin and development of the English language.

MATERIALS: 11 sentences, clauses, or phrases on one color paper. The sentences or phrases, when complied, comprise a paragraph. If there are twenty-two students, use two colors.

transparencies of Old English and Medieval manuscripts

REFERENCES: Grebanier, Bernard D., et al., English Literature and Its Backgrounds, Volume One. Indiana University, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1959, 11, 70, 87.

Irmscher, William F., Teaching Expository Writing, Dallas, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979, 94-105.

GUIDED PRACTICE: As students enter, ask them to select one piece of paper.

Explain the origin of the paragraph. Demonstrate on the overhead how a handwritten Medieval or Old English manuscript look. Explain that an unknown monk somewhere indicated a difference in thought by enlarging and illustrating one letter.

Elaborate on this separation of thought by showing ornate illustrations.

List on the board student reasons for separating a long paper into paragraphs. Information covered should include: to move logically from one idea to another; to keep the reader reading; to give more details; to use dialog; to give structure; to change time, setting, tone; to emphasize; to make the work easier to read; to allow the reader time to think about what was read, to "feel right."

Remind students of the invention of the printing press in Europe around 1440. Explain that (¶) this symbol was used by the printer to inform the type-setter that there should be an indention, a break in thought, on that line.

Ask students if an idea can alwaysbe explained in one paragraph.

Explain Alton Becker's and William Irmscher's TRIPSQA method of paragraphing. (TRI means topic, restriction, illustration but can be arranged IRT or TIR as well as TRI; PS refers to problem, solution; QA denotes question, answer). The method of developing a paragraph depends upon the topic, the audience, and the author.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Ask students to look at the phrase or sentence they chose when they entered.

Divide students into groups determined by the color of their phrase or sentence.

Designate the chalkboard as the beginning of the paragraph, and assign students to BE the section of the paragraph they have chosen as they align themselves in order.

Read aloud each paragraph with students reading their own segment. This becomes especially effective with more than one group because there is no REALLY correct way to structure the paragraph. The first student/sentences from each group read aloud at the same time — if they begin the same way. Everyone will react as soon as a difference occurs, at which point one group completes the paragraph, justifying the order it selected. The other group(s) then read(s) the different paragraph, justifying that selection.

Allow students to determine whether the paragraph follows TRI, PS or QA. Require students to rearrange their original paragraph with a different TRI pattern, choosing RIT or IRT. Again applaud the variety and recognize that there is no ONE correct way to arrange material. The choice belongs to the author.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Students will demonstrate an understanding of paragraphing as they use the writing process to compose and create.

CLOSURE: This mobile paragraphing not only teaches the structure and organization of a paragraph, as well as the history of paragraphing; it also fosters student cooperation, leadership skills and paragraph evaluation.

Ultimately, students will be tested based upon their own proficiency in

organizing and writing paragraphs.

Students will each select ONE as they enter the classroom.

to swim unceasingly in order to drive oxygen into its gills

yet not all sharks are dangerous; it is simply that we know little about them and many "facts" concerning sharks are proving untrue

perhaps all sharks regularly seek such highly oxygenated waters and nap, but as yet we simply do not know

biologists theorized that the shark's respiratory system forced the animal

for instance, it was long believed that sharks never slept and never stopped swimming

partially stream fed, contained an unusually large amount of oxygen

this belief was proved false when a Japanese diver entered an underwater cave

the most feared, dreaded, and reviled of all the world's creatures is possibly the shark

and discovered several large sharks that seemed to be dozing

the chief explanation of the shark's behavior seems to be that the cave's waters

the sharks remained stationary and appeared asleep; scientists could even touch and stroke them

Marietta H. Montgomery, Killeen High School, Killeen, Texas

School Newspapers Are Meant for Reading...
Not for Cutting Out Burger King Coupons

GRADE LEVEL: Senior high school journalism class and/or newspaper production class

Taking the easy way out comes naturally to anyone, especially the high school journalist. However, with a little observation and a pinch of imagination, a student reporter can change that dull, uninteresting, one line, boring, "so what?" report (usually from his/her class or club beat) into an effective and appealing news feature—with an added bonus of a published by-line.

Because of the "nature of the beast"—limited time and vast inexperience on the part of the student, and sometimes the teacher—the monthly school newspaper runs boring news briefs that no one reads, except the class/club or individuals actually involved. Thus, the reader only looks for fast food coupons in the school newspaper.

Eliminate the news brief fillers from your school paper and raise your readership 90% by turning the briefs into NEWS FEATURES.

FOCUS: Read with expression, the following news brief:

> "Mrs. Porter's English class wrote poems for the Fading Youth Rest Home and delivered them to the residents on Valentine's Day."

BIG DEAL! WHO CARES? BOORRRING!

But, how about. . .

> "As the fragile elderly woman pulled her shawl around her stooped shoulders, John Blank, junior, began reading his poem to her. She smiled, for no one had given this much attention to her since she came to Fading Youth Rest Home. But on that Valentine's Day, the 23 students from Mrs. Jena Porter's junior English class visited the residents and read stories and poetry they had written to the residents."

More than likely, the reader will momentarily forget that Whopper coupon and read on, just what we want them to do.

MATERIALS: Copies of school newspaper issues, exchange papers, overhead projector and transparencies that you previously made.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Project a transparency of an actual news brief from a school newspaper. After the students read it and say "uck!" let them brainstorm, suggesting ways to featurize the brief. Refer to the 5 W's and H (Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How?) and lead the students, if necessary, through them. By identifying each news element, the students decide which element(s) to featurize. Ask the question "Who cares?" after each news element given so the students can identify the catch—the key to an interesting story.

Work with one or two more published briefs in the same way so that the students realize those boring beat reports do contain real stories. During this time, students may work in pairs for a specified time on the given news brief and then report the "real story" to the rest of the class.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Give each student another published news brief from an issue of your school newspaper. Instruct them to find at least one different angle for a possible story and describe how to develop it into an appealing article. The students will share their ideas with the class, giving their justifications for their new stories. Review the techniques of straight news and feature stories at this time so that the students may use them when writing their articles.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Once the students "see" the real story in a news brief, use their background knowledge of the straight news and feature stories to write a news feature. After they contact their weekly news beat sources, the students will identify a human interest angle from one of the gathered briefs and decide on a story.

They will identify whom they should interview and will formulate interview questions. After conducting the interview(s), the student reporter will write the news feature, incorporating straight news and feature techniques. Remind the reporters to keep those quotes and descriptions coming. Quotes enliven a story, and "setting the scene" easily introduces description into the news feature. Grouping and conferencing are effective teaching devices during extended practice time.

CLOSURE: After writing the stories, students can share their work through actual publication. In a journalism class, publish an "in-class" paper or possibly use the stories in the school paper. The newspaper staff actually writes their stories for publication in the school paper.

Motivation abounds. The students "publish" with a by-line for all to see, and you enjoy a wealth of material acceptable for publication in the school paper. In fact, you might have to increase the number of pages in the publication because the stories are so good.

Melicent Bryarly, Stroman High School, Victoria, Texas

4 The Mixed Level Lessons

The best ideas are common property.
Seneca

The brain does not simply and passively accept information. Rather it selects, builds, constructs, interprets, and draws inferences. The teachers writing for this mixed level section remind us of what M.C. Wittrock states in "Education and the Cognitive Processes of the Brain." Teaching isn't so much knowing the age, sex, and intelligence of learners as it is knowing their strategies and constructive processes. This knowledge leads more directly to good instruction.

Reading/Summarizing/Analyzing: An Assignment for Success

GRADE LEVEL: Sixth through Thirteen Grades

Like teachers at all levels—ever-searching for assignments to interest and to teach students—I designed an extended reading and writing unit which produced remarkably good papers from college freshman English students. Although this unit is applicable to all levels because the readings and the length of the writing assignments can be so tailored, it is especially appropriate for grades 9-13. In combining "real world" and academic experiences, it appeals to both student and teacher.

MATERIALS: Magazine and newspaper articles that focus on child care and daycare centers, especially those that enable students to fact-gather, those with varied audiences andstyles, and those that promote the synthesis of new facts.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Direct guidance unit took four class periods. In the first,I gave each student a photocopy of a one-page article from a news magazine, and we read it aloud. Those who were not reading were asked to mark significant passages and then to respond, analyze, interpret. After our discussion, I asked students to write in their journals a one-sentence summary of the article. We read a few of these and came to general agreement about the main idea and how to phrase it. Finally, we broke into groups to re-read the article to determine how each paragraph contributed to that main idea.

In the next class period, I divided the class into thirds: one third searched the article for evidence of the author's biases or prejudices; another group found and

analyzed any sentences with unusual punctuation or exceptional stylistic features. The third group uncovered the pattern of development for each paragraph. Then armed with this information, each student drafted a paragraph in the form of a report to classmates. Assuming they were authorities on the area they had explored—language, style, organization of the article—they were to convince classmates that their reported findings were valid.

On the third day, I made transparencies of two paragraphs from each group and led the class in discussing topic sentences, use of specific examples, and stylistic concerns such as transition and strong verbs. Then, following criteria established through our discussion, students revised their paragraphs for submission. Their assignment for the next day was to re-read the article, preferably aloud, and to mark any new discoveries with a different marking code.

Our final class activity required that students look at this now-familiar article from two different perspectives. First, they were asked to write in their journals, in order of importance, five significant questions they had about issues raised but not answered in the article. Second, they were to respond (again in journals) to the article in terms of their own academic major or their own experiences. As pre-med and business majors, for instance, what special areas suggested in the article could they explore? Or, as parents or siblings, what personal issues needed explanation or further research? With these final focuses, students were ready to become experts. So we went to the library, where they set about their independent work.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: With the broad topic of daycare narrowed both by their questions and their personal or career focus, students found and photocopied five articles on the narrowed topic from different sources. Then they chose an article to summarize and analyze rhetorically following the procedures used with the model article. I suggested that they add comparison as a discovery tool, that they compare the length of sentence, the levels of diction,the uses of authority, the patterns of development. All this was done outside of class. Then after a week of independent work, they brought intheir articles and notes for in-class writing.

First, they wrote a letter to one of the authors they had read, explaining the uses they had made of the article. (Some students actually mailed theirs.) Second, they wrote for an audience unaware of the issue, explaining as clearly as possible the pertinent facts they had discovered. Third, they wrote a letter to me, discussing the idea of audience as they had observed published writers' choices of diction and syntax and as their previous two writings had illustrated their own awareness and consideration of audience.

I read all these writings, commenting on content only. The students revised their favorite and submitted it fo a grade.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Later in the semester, when we reviewed sentence struc-

ture, they returned to their articles to find and copy samples of the patterns we were discussing; when we worked through connotation and denotation, we used their articles to find examples. I encouraged the students to stay alert to the issue, to skim periodicals for developments, to discuss with each other whatever they found. Some students became vitally interested: one young mother became so concerned about her own child's well-being in daycare she withdrew to stay at home; one business major discovered facts his insurance salesman father put to use in his own business; one pre-med student discovered scientific and medical journals the had not known even existed. The unit enlivened class discussions and gave students experience with the way real writers use the rhetorical skills of the classroom.

CLOSURE: For their examination, the class again returned to their articles and"their issues." Their assignment was to address the school board, either arguing against the establishment of an on-campus daycare center or persuading the board of the advantages of on-campus daycare facilities. Given the topic two days in advance of the final, they were allowed to select any format they preferred, to draft their work outside of class, and even to document their arguments if they wished. For me, those finals were a pleasure to read. No paper was like another; no content was really predictable; no student failed because no student had crammed isolated facts into his or her brain, and they had done research.

NOTE: I borrowed the idea of having the students argue for or against on-campus daycare from the Study Guide for "The Write Course" written by Harryette Stover of the Dallas County Community College District.

Tahita Fulkerson, Tarrant County Junior College, Fort Worth, Texas

Hurricane Hunt: Read, Research, and Write

GRADE LEVEL: Eighth to Twelfth Grades

This unit maximizes the procedures used in generating effective reading and writing skills. The students read an abridged account of an event, research the same or similar events, and, write a creative theme based upon that reading and research.

MATERIALS: Disaster poster, "Hurricane Hunt" study sheet (or similar study sheet).

FOCUS: Display poster of headlines and pictures of natural disasters.
Discussion of natural disasters. What makes them so dangerous? How are we able to survive a disaster better now than 100 years ago? Are we better able to survive

than people living in other countries?

GUIDED PRACTICE: Review topics and headings in order to find more information about natural disasters. Together explore resources available in the library.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Students, working in groups of no more than three, read assigned article from "Hurricane Hunt" and do research in library. They report to class on facts found from research. Using information gained from their research, they complete the creative writing portion of the study sheet by selecting one topic from the list and writing a short theme. The first draft is read, discussed, and edited by members of the library research group.

Students and teacher discuss the good points of the themes, why they selected the particular writing mode, and what problems were encountered.

Students present their themes orally to the class.

CLOSURE: Discussion of presentations.

Mary Ann Smith, Oliveira Intermediate School, Brownsville, Texas

How Decorative Are Your Legs?
or Persuasive Writing Requires Elaborative Reasons

GRADE LEVEL: Fifth through Twelfth Grades

Persuasive writing requires students to think logically and clearly. All too often right-brained dominant students struggle in this area even though they may write well for expressive and literary purposes. The following lesson involves students by having them sketch a table to illustrate the substance of their persuasive rough drafts. Using this graphic, students quickly find any omission of reasons and/or elaborative details needed in their papers. Such insight gives students clear direction and thus the necessary motivation for writing a second draft. This lesson enables students to: 1. use the composing process to plan and generate writing;

2. write descriptive, narrative, and expository paragraphs;

3. write persuasive discourse of a variety of types;

4. evaluate content, organization, topic development, appropriate transition, clarity of language, and appropriate word and sentence choice according to the purpose and audience for which the piece is intended;

5. choose appropriate words to convey intended meaning;

6. use oral language effectively in a variety of situations;

7. identify the stated or implied main idea of a selection;

8. recognize relevant details;
9. draw conclusions and make inferences;
10. follow directions involving substeps;
11. interpret diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations;
12. vary rate of reading according to purpose.

By the end of the lesson, the students will analyze their persuasive rough drafts and write revised drafts.

MATERIALS: Persuasive papers previously written as a twenty-minute timed writing sample in which the topic was given and no class prewriting occurred; overhead projector, blank transparency film, transparency pens.

FOCUS: Selecting a draft at random, ask for a student volunteer to read it slowly, sentence by sentence. Tell the class that it is their task to figure out what you are doing on the overhead. As the paper is read, sketch a table image which represents the contents of the draft. (See "Input" for details). Ask the class to explain what you have drawn. A second paper may need to be read and sketched for some classes.

PROCEDURES (INPUT): Explain the meaning of the parts of the table:

1. rectangular table top=writer's opinion or main idea,
2. table legs=supporting reasons for the opinion (varying thickness indicates strength of reasons),
3. ornamentation of the legs=elaborative details explaining the supporting reason,
4. tablecloth=word choice (the degree of cleanliness reflects the appropriateness of language for the specified audience).

PROCEDURES (MODELING): Read another paper and sketch it on the overhead, now that the class knows what each part of the drawing represents.

PROCEDURES (CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING): Now the class sketches another paper as you read it slowly. Turn off the overhead projector so your sketch is not seen by the class. Students compare their drawings with a peer before you reveal your drawing. (NOTE: Emphasize to students that sketches may not be identical. If they are similar or if students can orally defend their drawings, accept them).

GUIDED PRACTICE: Students form peer response groups of four or five. Ask each student to read his or her persuasive draft while the other students sketch it. Sharing of the sketches with the author of the draft should promote comments as to the needed revisions of the paper.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: In class or for homework, depending on the length of the papers, have students write a second draft which incorporates the revisions suggested by their peers.

CLOSURE: Students to sketch on a separate piece of paper a table of both their rough and second drafts to illustrate the revisions made to their persuasive compositions during this lesson.

Sharon Skeans, Spring I.S.D.

Student to Author: Dynamite Connection

GRADE LEVEL: Sixth through Twelfth Grades

Looking for the ultimate reading/writing connections? The magical excitement of letters from famous authors who write to students is the payoff for this book report strategy. The gift to you is the gift of KNOWING your students have read at the analytical, evaluative levels.

MATERIALS: A book (fiction) that the whole class has read together, a list of books suggesting reading choices for the impending report (see extension), reviews from Time Magazine, New York Times, and children's literature reviews. Note: Libraries have addresses of authors or publishers' addresses for forwarding.

FOCUS: 1. Ask, "Who are some of your favorite authors? Favorite books? Do you suppose authors ever get to talk to students who read their books? How would you like a letter from your favorite author?"

2. Explain that this book report assignment (approximately 2-3 weeks) will almost PROMISE letters from authors!

GUIDED PRACTICE: 1. Discuss what kinds of characteristics made their favorite books effective? What makes uninteresting ones ineffective?

2. Announce that this book report/review will be approached through a friendly letter that they will write to the author.

3. Tell them they will search for all good points, questionable points in their books, and will offer authors a reader's critical evaluation of the book.

4. Brainstorm elements of the plot.

5. Discuss style.

6. Hand out photocopied reviews for models.

7. Have students identify types of comments offered in them and tell students

they will critique in similar fashion and will refer to specific pages in the books so that the author will be able to turn to that page and find the critiqued points.

8. Hand out study sheets for notetaking guidance (teacher-constructed sheet containing headings for plot elements and a page column. Add whatever guidelines, such as style, figurative language, transition tacticyou wish to teach.

9. Brainstorm critical contributions about the class-read book together.

10. Students take notes on study sheet. Page references are important.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: 1. Small groups continue the above process. Monitor.

2. Confirm again: All arguments must be defended, and authors must be able to locate the situation referred to by flipping to the page on which it takes place.

3. Hand out list of book choices.

4. Give out clear notetaking sheets.

5. Assign deadlines for notes, points, and questions as they read.

6. Students write letters. They may use book and notes.

8. They turn in prewrites and notes.

CLOSURE: Bring addressed, stamped envelope to mail to author. Writing day you receive letters with page references (for grading this is terrific and helps make sure students have read) and for the author, it is a real student reader's critical compliment! They almost ALWAYS write back.

Kaye Dunn, Deep Wood Elementary, Round Rock, Texas

From Poetry to Prose

GRADE LEVEL: Fourth through Tenth Grades

Children generally enjoy reading narrative poems, and they also appreciate the opportunity to write a short story. However, many of their stories lack a plausible plot. For this assignment students read a narrative poem and use its plot as the basis for their own short stories. The setting for their story, though, must differ from that of the poem.

For example, a poem which has worked well in my classes is "The Highwayman" by Alfred Noyes. Students use the same plot, theme, and character types: a thief, his sweetheart, a jealous rival, and some form of lawful authority. The setting might become King Arthur's court, an American western, the gangster days of the 1930's, any aspect of the 1980's, or a time and place in the future.

Students have fun with this assignment, and I enjoy reading their stories. this lesson enables students:

1. To reinforce literary elements;
2. To create an original short story;
3. To increase the appreciation of narrative poetry;
4. To improve reading comprehension skills;
5. To develop higher level thinking skills (synthesis).

MATERIALS: At least two narrative poems

GUIDED PRACTICE: Distribute a copy of a short narrative poem which the students read. Invite them to respond to the statements below:

1. Write the plot of the poem in one sentence.
2. List the characters.
3. Describe the setting.
4. State the theme.

Call on students to share their responses with the entire class.Next the class chooses one setting; then volunteers compose a story aloud as the teacher writes their group story on the board or overhead.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: Assign, or allow students to choose a narrative poem, one they can easily understand or one the class has already discussed. (A song which tells a story also works well.) Each student should summarize the plot in a sentence, list the characters, describe the setting, and state the theme for that poem. He/she should then choose a different setting and write an original story. To make the story real for the reader, encourage students to include specific details as they develop their characters' personalities and describe the setting.

CLOSURE: Publishing! Upon completion of the assignment, bind the stories together and place them in the library as a book of short stories for the entire school to enjoy.

Nancy Dunn, Alief Middle School, Houston, Texas

How Can I Get 125 Papers Graded in One Day?
or Students Grading Students

Grade Level: Fifth through Twelfth Grades

My students wrote a persuasive paper on censorship after studying the Ray Bradbury novel, Fahrenheit 451. First they wrote their opinions on censorship. Most had few, if any, feelings about it. Then, they spent several days in the library

researching the topic from periodicals. Each student shared one article on censorship orally in class. More research was then done for a persuasive paper, using five sources and internal documentation. Students followed the writing process in writing their papers and concluded the unit by grading each other's papers. This model lesson deals with the day the students analyzed each other's papers. (Note: Students not satisfied with a grade were asked to return their paper to their teacher for a reevaluation.) With modifications, this lesson could be adapted for the lower grade levels. This lesson enables students to:

1. use the composing process to plan and generate writing;
2. write descriptive, narrative, and expository paragraphs;
3. use the forms and conventions of written language properly;
4. evaluate content, organization, topic development, appropriate transition, clarity of language, and appropriate word and sentence choice according to the purpose and audience for which the piece is intended;
5. proofread written work for punctuation, spelling, grammatical and syntactical errors, paragraph indentation, margins and legibility of writing
6. choose appropriate words to convey intended meaning;
7. use oral language effectively in a variety of situations;
8. identify the stated or implied main idea of a selection;
9. recognize relevant details;
10. distinguish between fact and nonfact;
11. draw conclusions and make inferences;
12. follow directions involving substeps;
13. vary rate of reading according to purpose.

By the end of the lesson, the student, with three others in a group, analyzes three research persuasive papers on the topic of censorship and assigns each one a grade according to an analytic scale.

FOCUS: Students were asked to write a metaphor on the topic of trust. "Trust is a . . . " After they wrote the metaphor, the students we're to write six sentences showing how trust was this metaphor. (Example: Trust is a wedding ring. It has no beginning and no end.) This warm-up then led to the topic of trust and how other students were trusting them to do a fair job of analyzing their papers.

MATERIALS: Previously written censorship papers from another class period, an analytic scale that students could mark holistically so as to determine a grade, an overhead pen and marker.

PROCEDURES: Students were arranged in groups of four. Each group was given three papers to analyze. The analytic scales were stapled onto the top of each persuasive paper. A number was written on the top of the analytic scale so that the

author of the paper would remain anonymous. Each group read all three papers first. Then, according to the analytic scale, students judged individual parts of the paper one at a time. For example, each introductory paragraph was reread and given a score of A, B, or C, according to the guidelines set up in the analytic scale.
Modeling: An introductory paragraph was read aloud by the teacher, who then explained what grade she would give it, according to the scale, and why.

GUIDED PRACTICE: The teacher then walked around the classroom to help settle disputes over the individual grades and to answer questions students had about the interpretation of the analytic scale.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: After the papers were read and grades were written in for each of the categories analyzed, the teacher asked the students to write (at the top of the analytic scale) what grade they thought the paper deserved overall. Once the teacher averaged the individual grades to come up with an overall grade, students; "quesstimates" were no more than one or two points off the final numerical grade.

CLOSURE: In closing, the teacher asked students what they learned about writing papers from having analyzed and graded some of their classmates' papers. Their responses were recorded on the overhead and included such remarks as "Neatness is important," and "Sloppy punctuation detracted from the overall effectiveness of the paper." If a student was dissatisfied with the grade given to his or her paper, he or she had the option to return the paper to the teacher for a grade.

Censorship Paper Evaluation

In your group of four, please give this persuasive paper grades in each category listed below.

Introduction

A Strong, catches the reader's attention in twenty seconds
B Adequate, may not be as catchy, but does the job
C Weak, does not catch reader's attention, or is totally irrelevant

Thesis

A Well stated, tells the reader clearly and concisely which point of view is going to be argued in the paper
B Stated the paper's argument, but does not make it as clear and concise as it should be
C Poorly stated or non-existent

Supports

A 7-9 quotes which support and relate well to the thesis statement

B 5-7 quotes which adequately support and relate to the thesis statement
C 3-5 quotes which poorly support and relate to the thesis statement

Elaboration
A Quotes are well-discussed and explained in the paper
B Quotes are adequately discussed and explained in the paper
C Quotes are not discussed or are poorly discussed and explained in the paper

Format
A Quotes are properly documented; Works Cited page has five supports which are alphabetized and followed the MLA format
B Quotes are documented with a few errors; Works Cited page has some errors with the MLA format
C Quotes are not documented; No Works Cited page or the MLA format is unrecognizable

Sentence Structure
A No run-ons or fragments; punctuation is flawless
B One run-on or fragment; minor errors in punctuation
C More than one run-on or fragment; many punctuation errors

Transitions
A Paper flows well through sentence combining and excellent transitions
B Paper flows adequately through some sentence combining and excellent transitions
C Paper does not flow well at all; little or no sentence combining and few or no transitions

Spelling
A No spelling errors
B No more than three spelling errors
C More than three spelling errors

Conclusion
A Well written; related back to introduction
B Adequately written; may not have related well to introduction
C Poorly written or non-existent; does not relate to introduction

As a group, you must decide whether each category deserves an A, B, or C, according to the guidelines. You may add pluses or minuses. I will avenge the grades and place the final average on the paper. The student will have the right to accept this group grade or have me reevaluate it.

Rebecca Kutsko, Westfield High School, Spring ISD

Jeopardy, Too!

GRADE LEVEL: Sixth through Twelfth Grades

"Review day, class!" The teacher smiles happily as she instructs, "Get out your notes!"

"Does she actually expect me to have notes?" Tommy ponders.

"Remember the first day of notetaking? The notes we copied on the first day of school? Now, who can share the answer to...." the teacher initiates "The Review Day."

HORROR! Teachers seem to unknowingly "set up the students for the kill" on that most excruciating day known as "review day." Ironically, that is the day when all notes seem to have taken some time off for good behavior and disappeared for twenty-four hours. Nightmarish days of review haunt me still. As in English teacher, I wanted better memories for my students. The coach in me incorporated some academic competition into "The Review Day" through "Jeopardy, Too!," a simulation of the original game show Jeopardy

Jeopardy fascinated me because of its unique answering method. The contestants received the ANSWER and provided the QUESTION. The challenge of remembering to phrase a question stimulates the review process to new heights. "Jeopardy, Too!" definitely "beefs up" the review day monotony. "Let the games begin...."

FOCUS: "Jeopardy, Too!" creates an exciting competitive atmosphere for the academic classroom. I explain Jeopardy.

Students: a. phrase questions about given answers;

b. choose any category they feel comfortable with;

c. use listening skills to remember any incorrectly answered selections of money value chosen by previous contestants;

d. learn a sense of fair play, competitiveness, and positive supportiveness with peer groups.

MATERIALS: Chalkboard, questions and answers needed for review, regular classroom set, "Vanna White" volunteer to erase correctly answered selections and keep score.

GUIDED PRACTICE: I begin the review by asking the students if they have ever seen the game show Jeopardy. I explain or lead them through an example on the board of a typical Jeopardy question.

WHAT A MAN!	WHAT A WOMAN!
$10	$10
$ 20	$20
$ 30	$30

Teacher: Tommy, choose a category.
Tommy: What a Man! for $10.
Teacher: He loved a girl from forbidden family.
Tommy: Who was Romeo?
Teacher: Correct! Great answer, Tommy! $10 for Team A

Take the students through several examples until you feel they have the "hang" of the game. Give the following rules:

a. During the explanation of the game, I list the types of questions that will be covered and what types of categories they will appear under. (EXAMPLE: WHAT A WOMAN! would include answers about the female characters covered in the lessons.) I arrange the answers from easiest ($10) to the hardest ($50). I limit each category to 5 selections.

b. Divide the students into equal teams.

c. Talking constitutes loss of turn for the team and possibly loss of money already earned. Emphasize fair play. (EXAMPLE: Team A talks. They have earned $150 at that point of the game. The teacher can dock them money of any amount, skip a turn for them, or both.)

d. The students have 10 seconds to answer; all answers must be phrased in a question. (EXAMPLE: "Romeo" is incorrect. "Who is Romeo?" would be correct.)

e. Jeopardy allows the contestant to continue answering until an incorrect answer is given. To allow as many students as possible to participate, a correct answer generates "money " for the team and the next team gets a chance to answer.

f. The next contestant does not have to choose any previously selected category or answer. The contestant must remember any previous selection without prompting from anyone. (EXAMPLE: A student on Team A selects WHAT A WOMAN! for $10 and does not answer correctly. The next contestant on Team B cannot remember the category or monetary value chosen, but knows the answer. No prompting can be given. LISTENING SKILLS BECOME VERY IMPORTANT!)

g. After a contestant correctly answers, "Vanna White" erases it to eliminate confusion. The winning team receives a reward to add extra incentive for participation. (EXAMPLE: Rewards range from allowing the winners to leave first at the bell to giving extra credit on the exam.)

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Now students play the game.

EXTENDED PRACTICE: At the conclusion of the game, there may be some answers left. Open up the unanswered categories to the entire class and see if someone knows the question. This will give students who did not have a chance to select the category an opportunity to respond.

CLOSURE: To "wrap up" the lesson, ask the students how they felt about the game and its unusual rules. Debriefing enables the teacher to get feedback from the students. Reiterate the required information for the exam and ask students for any last minute discussion "needs."

Marsha Schultz, Victoria High School, Victoria, Texas

Motivation Through Engaged Learning

GRADE LEVEL: Fourth through Twelfth Grades

Engaged learning through discovery is one way to motivate students. Problem solving is a necessary skill in itself, but it can also be a tool for teaching. By using the Parnes method of problem solving, higher level thinking skills can be developed while students introduce themselves to a new literary piece and/or the theme of a given selection. Problem solving promotes the ability to make predictions realistically, which is an important life skill. This particular lesson introduces the novel The Witch of Blackbird Pond. This lesson will enable students to: 1. use the composing process to plan and generate writing;

2. substitute specific words for general words;
3. participate in group discussion;
4. present information in a variety of oral situations;
5. respond appropriately to a presenter;
6. use oral language effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences;
7. identify and evaluate main idea statements;
8. perceive cause and effect relationships;
9. predict probably future outcomes;
10. summarize and make generalizations;
11. distinguish between fact and non-fact;
12. follow directions involving substeps.

By the end of the lesson, the students will have evaluated possible solutions to a problem and methodically predicted the best possible one.

MATERIALS: Students need paper and pen; teacher needs overhead projector, blank transparency film, overhead pens OR chalkboard, chalk.

FOCUS: Ask students if any of them have ever stayed with someone other than their parents for a period of time longer than a weekend. Stimulate thinking with probing questions: "Did you know the family? Were they related to you? Was it like being at home? Were you made to feel comfortable? Did you have to follow new rules? Were you treated like your own parents would treat you? What if you didn't know the family very well? What were some problems you encountered? Did you attempt to solve them? Were there any you couldn't solve? What if you didn't know the family at all? What if something happened to your parents and you had to go to another country and live with a family you didn't know? " Write on the overhead: "Many, varied, and unusual problems which could occur from having to leave your home land and live with a new family."

MODELING: Students brainstorm a generous list, calling on all students for a chance to respond. Accept all responses without judging, listing them on the overhead. When student responses begin to wane, solicit from individuals which one in the list might be of most concern, encouraging the student to support his/her choice. Do not mark these in any way as students discuss their choices.

GUIDED PRACTICE: Divide class into small groups. Four to five work best. The group needs to be large enough to generate various ideas. Have each group choose five items from the brainstorming list which they think are of most concern as real problems. Each group must reach a consensus on the five chosen. Monitor groups, encouraging them to think of other problems besides ones on the list if they desire. From the five, have each group choose the one of most concern to them.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Following the same procedure as in modeling and guided practice, have groups brainstorm a list of all possible solutions to the problem of most concern chosen by them. From list, choose the five best solutions. Distribute an evaluation chart with teacher-chosen criteria on it. Students list their five best solutions and grade them in each of the criteria, using a ranking of 1-5; 1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest. Add the grades for each solution, and the highest number indicates best solution. After students become practiced with this problem solving technique, they should generate their own criteria. Upon completion of this process, each group will orally present its problem of most concern, explaining their suggested solutions, and supporting the one they chose to be the best according to the evaluation criteria.

CLOSURE: In closing, reveal to students that the heroine in The Witch of

Blackbird Pond faces this same crisis of leaving her home land. to live with a strange family in America due to the death of her parents. Were the problems of the heroine similar/different from the problems of today? Was she a problem-solver, or did she only react to them? Reading will determine whether or not the problems encountered are universal.

Betty Capel, Spring ISD

Afterword

When I became President of the Texas Joint Council of Teachers of English in 1987, I wanted, more than anything else, to represent members—fellow teachers—in word and in action. To that end, one of my first actions was to develop a questionnaire that polled members' opinions on what they wanted from their professional organization, what they expected, and what they thought were the various issues pervading education in Texas in 1987.

Primarily, members who responded to that questionnaire wanted two things from TJCTE: more information about current research, theory, and teaching practices and more information about legislative and Board actions in Austin. It was after tabulating results of that questionnaire that I conceived a monograph of exemplary teaching practices, a treasure trove of teaching ideas that would help members plan more effective lessons. Since the evaluation system for teachers in Texas was based on Madeline Hunter's lesson design, I thought the monograph would be more helpful if based on that design.

After presenting my idea to the Executive Committee in June, 1987 and winning their approval, I appointed Dr. Joyce Armstrong Carroll editor. We began by writing a call for manuscripts in both *Texas Voices* and *English in Texas*. This work culminated with the publication on the monograph you now hold in your hands, TJCTE's first monograph.

I would like to acknowledge the persons who made this monograph possible. First, and foremost, thanks to Joyce Armstrong Carroll for her extensive work in choosing the manuscripts and editing this collection. Second, thanks to Edward E. Wilson who worked with her on the cover design. I would also like to express my appreciation to the contributors, for without their good ideas and teaching practices this book would not be possible. Last, a special "thanks" to the Executive Committee (1987) with whom I worked, a group of dedicated professionals who supported my concept and shared my vision.

Betty G. Gray

That literacy is not worth teaching

if it doesn't provide access;
if it doesn't sponsor learning;
if it doesn't unleash literal power;
if it doesn't activate the greatest power of all—
imagination.

We and our views of literacy are needed—they are the only ones I know subtle and humane and tough enough for these times. May our beliefs prevail; and may we and our students, like our earth itself, survive and prosper.

Janet Emig
—from *Literacy and Freedom*
The Web of Meaning

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